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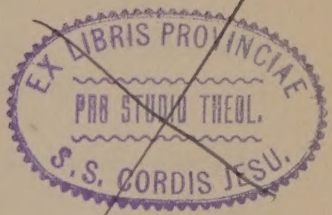
Discourses and Sermons

BY

RIGHT REV. JOHN McQUIRK, D.D., LL.D.
RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH
NEW YORK CITY

WITHDRAWN

"Teach me, O Lord, to number my days that I may learn wisdom."



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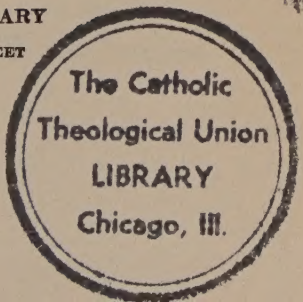

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Dedication

To the martyrs, patriots, scholars and saints of Rome and Ireland, this volume is respectfully dedicated by the Author in remembrance of his fifty-second year in the priesthood.

To Rome

To the City of Rome, the Temple of Justice, the Gates of all Nations:

She saw her glories star by star expire,
And up the steep barbarian monarchs ride,
Where the car climbed the Capitol; far and wide
Temple and tower went down, nor left a site.
What are our woes and suffrance? Come and see
The cypress, hear the owl, and plod your way
O'er steps of broken thrones and temples, ye!
Whose agonies are evils of a day—
A world is at our feet more fragile than our clay.
Yet come it will, the day decreed by Fates,
How my heart trembles while my tongue relates!

The day when thou, imperial Troy, must bend
And see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
Oh Rome! my country! City of the soul!
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee.
Thou wert the throne and grave of empires; still
The font at which the panting mind assuages
Her thirst of knowledge, quaffing there her fill,
Flows from the eternal source of Rome's imperial hill.

—*Byron.*

To Ireland

Let Erin remember the days of old,
'Ere her faithless sons betrayed her;
When Malachy wore the collar of gold,
Which he won from the proud invader.
When her kings, with standards of green unfurled
Led the Red Branch knights to danger,
'Ere the emerald gem of the western world
Was set in the crown of a stranger.

—*Moore.*

Dedicatory Epistle

To the Lovers of Ireland, by the Author:

Between England and Ireland there rolls a sea, black, deep, tempestuous, threatening because of its narrowness and of its being the issuance from the Atlantic. It can be crossed in a few hours. Similar is the body of water that runs between England and France; it is even narrower. Perhaps it is even less shallow. In these bodies of water the water seems to imitate the Bay of Fundy, near Newfoundland, where the tide rises and falls seventy-two feet in every twenty-four hours. When the storms drive the Atlantic into the Irish Sea, the sea rises mountain high, and it becomes more terrific in its violence, and frequently lifts vessels, as tiny things beaten before its mad fury; so that they who may have crossed the Atlantic without sickness are made sick almost unto death by the comparatively narrow water between Ireland and England, and between England and France. The waters, already dense, are made still denser by lack of expansion in their basins.

But far more sullen, dark, tempestuous, threatening and bitter to the very soul is the

sea of agonizing memories that wrench the hearts of the two governments; the moral sea that has held the two nations as strangers or aliens. And when, as has often happened, events have occurred such as have taken place in the last few years in Ireland, they are as the ocean storms that I have said lash that Irish sea to fury, filling the world with indignation so loud and long, and serving to keep alive and perpetuate the acrimony and bitterness now of 700 years standing. All the good in the way of reconciliation and good-will brought about by merely a certain tolerance and pacific measures have been dashed to the earth by the murderous executions of the past few years. They have led *and will lead* to murderous reprisals and deeds of vengeance as have always succeeded these dark acts of blood, even when apparently according to law; but what when not with even a semblance of law or right they are inflicted? When, in spite of justice, in cold blood and wanton cruelty, not for right but for vindictiveness and hatred? And this when those who were ready to rebel against the same government, and very rebels, the army refused to do its duty and the insurgents were reported to honors and high positions. Death for some rebels, surrender to and

honors for other rebels! Oh, Justice, thou hast fled to brutish beasts and men have lost their reason! We must die for treason when treason flourished over us. Is this the even-handed justice that commands us to die because we sought to live as the noblest men in all nations have done, as the fathers of our hangmen have done?

As a revolution cannot be made with rose water, neither can a revolution be quenched in blood and fire. The immortal rebel passes on to glory and by his example perpetuates the vestal fire, which is only put out by ultimate and glorious triumph.

All the water that flows around old England can never wash from her bloody hands the blood that shall stain her history with her incarnadine guilt. A few hundred policemen with their nightsticks could have put down the revolt while they sent twenty thousand men with all the artillery and ammunition that she had been saving from her armed merchantmen, and some who had become failures on the field of battle were sent where credit could be more easily won, and they forced boys to give perjured testimony!

For centuries blood had been shed between the two nations that would fill the bed of that

Irish Sea; an army could march knee deep in the blood that fertilized the land. For it is the blood of 700 years, years of bitter hate, discord, fierce destruction, civil war, unheard of internecine strife for which in history you would scarcely find a parallel. This recrudescence for a century healed is now torn open by the onslaught which the government has made upon a band of young men and boys, which should have been suppressed by the constabulary with their nightsticks, or some blank cartridges with the preliminary of reading the riot act. Such absolute militarism can only exasperate the people and goad them to deeds of violence driven thereto by despair, and a stubbornness for what they believe is right.

RIGHT REV. JOHN MCQUIRK, D.D., LL.D.
Rector of St. Paul's Church.

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Discourse on St. Paul.

PART I.

"I am pleased in my infirmities: when I am weak, then am I strong." (I Cor. 12.)

I can hardly presume to say anything in worthy words of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, lest I should profane the name and virtues of him who is the patron of this Church. Yet as Pastor of this venerable Church and as having filled that high post for upwards of forty years, and the subject having engaged my attention and moved my tongue and pen for so many years, I would feel derelict if I allowed this solemn occasion to pass unheeded and without some comment suitable to the Twenty-fifth day of January, the Saint's Feast Day.

Yet my duty becomes doubly and trebly difficult when I come to the task of making an appropriate choice of the facts and doings from the life of the Saint that we may dwell upon to our advantage.

In proceeding with a discourse on St. Paul, I can find no arrangement more desirable than that of his powers of preaching; his life and

history, his administration of all the churches, or his solicitude for all the Universal Church, his travels from one end of the world to another; his sufferings and martyrdom and death by decapitation by the Roman soldier. In such an order we shall not depart from the admirable course of his life, nor shall we omit any pregnant fact or salient characteristic. His whole Apostolic life will resolve itself into one or all of these chapters; but we will confine ourselves to his own admirable and inspired words and sublime thoughts.

"And I, brethren, when I came to you I came not in loftiness of speech, announcing to you the testimony of Christ. For I judged not that I knew anything among you, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling; and my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of spirit and power; that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. II, 1-5.)

St. Paul did not seek for human eloquence to make known and spread the Gospel. But he followed and cultivated the simplicity of the language of Jesus Christ. In this there was a power unknown to and far above all Grecian

and Roman eloquence or all human speech ever reached or could attain to. To it all the words of the most gifted of men are stale, insipid and unprofitable. As it is the spirit of God and the grace of Christ that give efficacy to all preaching and make it fruitable unto salvation, so it was the power of the spirit of St. Paul's words that converted the nations and brought them into subjection to Jesus Christ, so that in his time his converts were numbered by the millions and the nations of the earth were the harvest upon which the Gospel was shed and brought forth unfailing fertility to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the spread of religion to the uttermost bounds of the earth, and the unfailing fruit of divine grace.

"For if I preach the Gospel it is no glory for me; for not by my ability or speech do I depend upon as if it were of my doing or power, for necessity lieth on me, for woe is to me if I preach not the Gospel. For duty which I have received from Christ constrains me by the commands which I have received and the zeal with which I am consumed for the salvation of my brethren. For I rejoice in my infirmities; for when weak then am I strong by the power and grace of Jesus Christ,

and his sovereign mercy and unfailing resources.

"For if I do this willingly, I have a reward which Christ has promised. But if against my will the dispensation of the natural law is entrusted to me by God who appeared to me. What then is my reward? That preaching the Gospel I give the Gospel without charge that I abuse not my power in the Gospel.

"I was free from all before Christ came to me. I made myself the servant of all, that I might gain the more. I came not in loftiness of speech, announcing to you the testimony of Christ. For I judged not myself that I knew anything among you but Jesus Christ and Him crucified and I was with you in weakness, and fear and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of spirit and power; that your faith should not be in the wisdom of man but in the power of God." (Cor. II, 1-5.)

"To the weak I became weak; I stooped to their inability, that I might gain the weak and lead them to the Gospel; I became all and everything to all that I might save all. And I do all things for the Gospel's sake, that I may be made partaker thereof, and share its

blessings." (1 Cor., IX, 16-23.) St. Paul did not seek by human eloquence to make known and spread the Gospel. But he followed and sought the simplicity of the language of Jesus Christ. In this he employed a speech unknown to and far above all Grecian and Roman eloquence.

"What would it avail me to preach the Gospel to men, and to labor for their salvation, in season and out of season, in sufferings and in death even, if I myself were not faithful to the truth by faith and had not fulfilled to every jot and tittle the whole duty of the law as laid down by Christ Who has set me apart from men unto the preaching of the Gospel, as made known to me by the Church, and the divine revelations which I have received from on high before and since I was overcome by divine grace and the coming of Christ, I was made captive.

"For this purpose I chastise my body and bring it under subjection, lest perhaps when I have preached to others, I myself become reprobate." (1 Cor. IX, 27.) For the letters, they say, are indeed weighty, and strong, but his bodily presence weak, and the aspect contemptible. (II Cor.: X, 10.) He was wanting in that stature and dignity of carriage

which with many is associated with and suggests the power of the orator who would guide senates, overcome multitudes, and carry influence through the pleasure which such a mien inspires, and fill men's souls and imaginations; as we have read has been accomplished by great orators in ancient and modern times—from Demosthenes and Aeschines to Cicero and Liguori down to the most renowned orators of modern times, to Chrysoligus, Chrysostom, to Bernard and Savonarola.

"But we preach Christ crucified; to the Jews indeed a stumbling block and to the Gentiles foolishness: but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks, Christ is the Power of God, and the wisdom of God; for the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen to confound the wise and the wise to destroy the foolish and the things that are not and that are contemptible to bring to naught the things that are." (1 Cor.: 1; 23-29.)

Here we come to the secret power of St. Paul. He preached Christ crucified, nothing else, nothing more if more there could be. For what could be more powerful than the mysterious influence of the grace that went out

from the Crucifixion. For from this Crucifixion of Christ went forth with the water that issued from His side the power and grace that saved the world and saved and sanctified the souls of mankind.

For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord: and ourselves, your servants through Jesus. For God, Who said that light should shine out of darkness hath shone in our hearts to give the light of the grace and knowledge of the glory of God.

Agrippa said to St. Paul: "Much learning hath made thee mad." "I am not mad," replied Paul, "most excellent king. But I would to God that ye were all like to me in all things except these bonds." "But a little and thou persuadest me to be a Christian." "Would to God that in little and in much, in all things except these bonds thou wert made like to me. I appeal to Caesar." "To Caesar thou must go." And he was delivered into the custody of a Roman soldier who should watch over him, till they were ready to go up to Rome.

I cannot dwell upon the hardships and perils, by sea and land that the Apostle had to undergo on his way thither. Shipwrecks, attacks of robbers and three days in the depths

of the sea, the landing amidst ferocious enemies who looked upon Paul as a god.

There must have been a divine power and an unfailing efficacy in the preaching of the Apostle which must have come from the earnestness of his convictions and the perennial spring of the grace of Christ as it flowed into the soul of the Apostle, viewed as the victim of Christ's omnipotence and as the conquest of the words of Christ, and the effulgent light which shone about him when he was cast out from his home and his companions on the way to Damascus. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" "Who art Thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus of Nazareth Whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the goad." That is, it is hard for thee to oppose or kick against the omnipotence of divine grace: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" "Go into the City to the house of Ananias in the way called Straight, and he will tell you what to do." He was blinded for three days: not until that time did the scales fall from his eyes, and Paul realized the tremendous work which Jesus had wrought in him.

No marvel that so surpassing a change was at once effected and he began the heavenly career which for forty and more years trans-

formed him from persecutor of Christ and His followers to the sublime Apostle and Teacher of men. All this could have been only the result of the grace vouchsafed him so copiously and outpouring. For a man to be what Paul was, was truly a change of heart, and what he subsequently became was truly the work of the Most High and attests the divinity of Jesus Christ, its Lord and Author.

That God should die for God was a stupendous mystery only revealed to the Angelic Powers that constitute the Court of the Omnipotent God, and even to them but feebly or even inadequately disclosed. Hecatombs of victims could never exhaust the malice of sin and draw off its indestructible guilt, or put mankind in that state of original justice and sanctifying grace in which men had been made, and in which state alone they could enjoy supreme bliss and joy supreme to which they aspired by virtue of their rich endowments.

As in the Crucifixion God the Father was in Christ operating the mystery of the reconciliation between God and man; so, likewise, the grace of God was in St. Paul giving grace and power to his preaching and enabling him to find grace and power of expression for the great truths which he proclaimed to men. We

cannot fail to answer ourselves what the Saint means that he was strong in his weakness, and of little account in his stature, and of speech feeble according to some of his hearers, although many among the Corinthians would grant that some of his letters did not lack, but were even of considerable power. But Paul admonished them when he was come among them that though absent in body, yet he himself would be among them.

Must we fail to understand the power of a crucified life as modelled upon the living exemplar of a divine crucified Exemplar? What must have been the divine impression—the very superscription of God—upon the soul of Paul, one time Christ's persecutor, but now the embodiment of all His virtues—the very incarnation of His life, suffering, and death? That he was segregated from his mother's womb to be an Apostle of Christ, and to carry the Gospel everywhere throughout the nations of the earth, to both Jews for the old Law, and to the Gentiles for the new; that no flesh should glory save in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for Whom he would become all things for all men.

What must be the God-given power of the nail-pierced hands and feet, the thorn-crowned

head, the opened side wherefrom issued the blood of Christ which the sin-smitten earth absorbed, and sent up to heaven to invoke the forgiveness of sin and to draw down the grace of the Eternal God, and the dispensation of the mercy of the Most High—Who was in Christ's Crucifixion effecting man's salvation.

St. Paul is justly reputed as one of the greatest orators, and pre-eminently the greatest preacher that the Church has ever produced or the world has ever seen. The marvellous orations of Demosthenes and Aeschines among the Greeks, or the unsurpassed writings of Cicero, or many others of more recent date among the German, or French, or English, or American announcers of the Gospel cannot stand comparison before the speeches of St. Paul in his defense before Agrippa or Festus, or his oration before the Athenians, notably that which he addressed them, for the unknown God; or his marvellous letters to the Romans, and the Corinthians, and the Hebrews; and the incomparable History of the Acts of the Apostles in which he in thirty-eight chapters runs through the story of his life, his conversion, his government of the Universal Church, his travels by sea and land, his persecutions, his perils and floggings reaching as far as

Roman law allowed his persecutors to go; till, finally, his sufferings of all kinds until he was imprisoned, and after long detention, and in spite of all efforts, was put to death by decapitation, when in the same hour his chief, St. Peter, was crucified with his head downwards.

His eloquence was of no human source, which he contemned, but sprang spontaneously from his soul and came rushing upon it and in manner overwhelming it, as the torrent starting in the clouds and falling upon the mountain tops descends the lofty mountains, leaping from the rocky crags, sinking lower and lower till its force is spent upon the lake or streamlet which hurries it to the sea or vast oceans which cover the earth and fertilize the souls of men.

Lord Macaulay could find nothing in all literature to surpass or equal the few verses with which Paul ends his letter to the Romans. Who shall bring accusation against the elect of God? God Who justifieth, who is he that shall condemn? Christ Jesus Who died, yea, Who rose also again, Who is at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or per-

secution? Or the sword? But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"For in the justice of God is revealed by faith unto faith as it is written: And the just man by faith liveth.

"Always in my prayers: beseeching, if by any means at length by the will of God, I may, at some time, have a prosperous journey to come to you.

"And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that I have often purposed to come unto you (and I have been hindered hitherto), that I may have some fruit among you, even as among other Gentiles.

"That is, I may be comforted together with you, by that which is common to us both, your faith and mine."

Hear his account in his own phrases of his marvellous conversion to Christ. "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused by the

Jews, especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: Wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. My manner of life from my youth which was at the first among my own nation at Jerusalem, known to all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning if they would testify; but after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee; and now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers, unto which promise our twelve tribes instantly serving God day and night hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead? I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth; which also I did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them, and I punished them oft in every synagogue; and being exceedingly mad against them I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

"Wherefore, as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief

priests, at mid-day, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me, and them who journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying, it is hard for you to kick against the goad. And I said, who art Thou, Lord, and He said, I am Jesus Whom thou persecuteth, but rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and of these things in which I will appear unto thee; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light and from the ban of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in me.

"Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision; but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works of repentance. For these causes the Jews sought me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having, therefore, obtained help of

God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying some other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come—that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and unto the Gentiles."

And thus throughout the thirty-eight chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, which contain the history of the life and deeds of the Saint from his conversion to his death, appears the same divine eloquence of the Apostle. From Agrippa to Festus, and the glorious argument for the resurrection and immortality of the soul, which like an angel's trumpet aroused the Corinthians to this subject—in fact, awakens them from the dead and infuses new life and faith into them in this great belief—from his call to Christ to his proclamation to the Athenians of the unknown God, whom they ignorantly worshipped, he preached everywhere throughout the world the immortal Gospel of Christ, and summoned men to his life and the Christian standard of belief and morals.

His wonderful preaching was of a piece with that of the saints of earlier and later days, with Chrysostum and Chrysoligus who

had indeed modeled themselves on his powerful discourses, and with them was equally prolific of wondrous effects.

St. Paul's eloquence owed nothing to human speech or worldly power, or rather, it drew to itself and endowed it with divine grace and irresistible force which like a torrent from heaven bore away all obstacles and inundated the hearts of men.

Eloquence is not in words, however they may clothe or convey ideas; it must exist in the thought, the subject, the occasion, the man; it is born of the inspiring influences that surround it, and give it life and irresistible force; to this it chiefly owes its supreme power. The soul of the truthful is incomparably more eloquent; and undying power and truth is always eloquent: eloquence, or what seems to be such is not genuine but may be bogus or counterfeit.

There is nothing in the Old Testament or the New to surpass the graphic power of St. Paul, except the language of Jesus Christ, Whose language is beyond all human power. Where is there anything to be compared with the Sermon on the Mount, or the longing of Christ, even as the bridegroom waiteth for the bride, or the maternal love expressed by Christ when He says how willingly would He have

gathered the children of Jerusalem together, as the hen gathers her chickens under her wings when the rain lowers or the storm gathers—how gladly would He bring them under His wings and protection. But they would not: behold they shall be left to the enemies to meet their destruction. A time will come when these enemies will surround the holy city, and beat it flat to the ground, when not a stone will be left upon a stone. Nothing more pathetic or moving than Christ looking upon the city and lamenting their ingratitude and steel-hearted indifference. All these calamities were brought home to them a few years after the death of Christ; in fact, His blood was still recent and bedewed the hill of Calvary, so graphically designated as the hill of skulls.

It was the two-edged sword of the Word of God, not the meretricious rhetoric of human utterance that Paul, like Christ, made use of to convert the hearts and souls of men, and lead them to the grace which could come down from the blood and wounds of Christ; and His undying love and inexhaustible fortitude that enabled Him to endure the prison and all the agony, and torments of His death that He might lead captivity captive and return to

the right hand of His Father the spoils which He has earned by His life and death. Did it not behoove the Son of Man to so enter into His throne that He could justly claim that He had merited it by His own sufferings, voluntarily assumed, yet laid upon Him by the Eternal Father.

So with the great Apostle who proposed to himself the sufferings and death of Christ; and supply by his own sufferings all that was wanting to the redemptive power of Christ—if such deficiency existed, which Paul seems to imply. But can we fail to exclaim: O Great Paul darest thou intimate that any such lack of suffering did exist among the inexhaustible woe and torments of the Son of God? Ah, no. Such is not the meaning of the Great Apostle. We have heard of the stigmata of St. Francis and of other great servants of God. These were truly the stigmata of the Saints and of St. Paul. Yet it is not of such that the Apostle speaks when he would fill out the measure of the sufferings that was wanting to the sufferings of Jesus Christ. For of such abundant and almost infinite suffering nothing could be wanting to those of Jesus Christ. We have about us in our bodies the mortification of Christ Jesus—not that such was want-

ing, but that the knowledge of these sufferings, the impress of these wounds should be carried everywhere through the world—from Jerusalem, to Antioch, and Macedon, and Spain and Italy—to everywhere under the superintending province of Christ. For this did he announce the sufferings to the Philippians, to the Thessalonians, to the Corinthians that everywhere the measure of Christ's blood and sacrifice might reach all the redeemed in Christ, and that Paul himself should be the bearer, and divine impression of the wounds and sufferings and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Not then that Paul would fill up what was wanting, but that Paul would bear everywhere in his body the marks and wounds and blood-lettings of Christ shed upon Calvary but poured out for human redemption everywhere from Jerusalem, to Antioch, to Spain, to Asia Minor, in a word, to the whole universe which embraced all human souls and which should become the divine propagation of the Gospel.

The trials and hardships of the Apostle knew no limits; they embraced every degree of suffering and self-sacrifice and unworldliness. Before his death he saw the Gospel spread everywhere throughout the whole world. In a few years this sound had gone forth to the ends

of the earth. In a few years owing to the extent of the Roman Empire which served to diffuse it and carry it on its lightning career, there was no part of the globe in which it was not known and spoken. In the second century the Roman empire comprehended the fairest portion of the earth and the greater part of mankind, says the history of the Decline and Fall. From that on its extent was far beyond its rapid decline until in a thousand years, especially after the transfer from Rome to Constantinople the work of demolition increased with accelerated velocity. Nothing but the debris remained of the pagan world and the religion of its material churches and temples and the inroads of Tartars after the 3d and 4th centuries. From that time on the material pagan temples were consecrated into Christian edifices, and so they remain at the present time and give evidence of remaining forever. The Pantheon has been flung in the air to a height of more than 400 feet to constitute the dome—the wondrous dome—of St. Peter's; pagan pillars are the solid support of St. Paul's with their traced columns, as if of lace and embroidery, where the Benedictines pursue the gentle and professed studies of their youth and lifetime.

Martyrdom was of common occurrence in the days of St. Paul and St. Peter. Martyrdom was prevalent everywhere. The blood of the martyrs was in those years the seed of the Church—its maturing sap and vitality. Tablets to their memory are to be seen everywhere. The memory of the supreme pontiffs of paganism was on every side. The temple of Augustus was not yet the quarry which it subsequently became. The Colosseum where the martyrs laid down their lives in testimony of their faith—where Polycarp, St. Ignatius and so many others paid this tribute to their faith, when exposed to the wild beasts let loose to swallow them, was still standing, and does yet stand an eternal monument to paganism and at the same time an undying monument to the blood of the successors of Peter and Paul and all the rest of the white robed army of the followers of Christ. While Rome, exclaims the Venerable Bede, shall stand, the Colosseum shall stand, and when Rome falls, the world. They both yet stand, one as eternal as the other.

Miracles were the instruments which the apostles made use of for the spread and growth and unfailing proof of the Gospel throughout the world. The sceptic may scoff

and ask for more infallible proofs: but as Christ said, an evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign, yet a sign will not be given, but the sign of Jonas in the belly of the whale. For as the son of a man was three days and three nights in the whale, so then shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the bosom of the earth. Miracles are the very sign manual of the Deity and the very handiwork of the Most High giving the proof that is necessary, yet holding back the testimony that might be too overwhelming and coerce free will—man's sovereign attribute. For miracles are enough to satisfy rational beings, enough to satisfy those who will be satisfied; yet enough to humble pride and incredulity; enough for all, yet enough to humble the pride of man.

What were the military provosts of the combined forces, the abomination of abominations in the city of Jerusalem, whose citizens had been mixed with the blood of their religious rites by Pontius Pilate? What profit was this to Jerusalem and its renowned temple? Paul was destined to drag to the very dust the pride of Imperial Rome with all its 700 years of glorious history of kings, consols, rulers of so many kinds.

Rome, Grand Imperial Rome, with its symbol of sticks—Rome, before whose conquering legions Carthage fell, as did the walls of Jericho before the trumpet of Joshua—Rome, with its illimitable limits from the Atlantic to the Caspian, from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, Rome fell scattering its debris all over the face of the world proclaiming the lesson that while the national life is incorruptible, the national life is invincible. And the only epitaph left to mark the universal ruin was the immortal lesson designated as St. Paul's epistle to the Romans accompanied with other writings of the same to Cor., Th., Vol., Heb. and the remainder of the inspired epistle.

Seek now the city of the Caesars, and its monuments that promised to be eternal. Where are they? Fifteen feet below the surface—conveying an eloquent lesson of the instability of human things, all like the nameless column with the buried base covered with ashes and forgotten.

Tully was not more eloquent than those nameless columns with buried bases, exclaims the English poet Byron. Where is now the golden palace of the Palatinate or the towered castles of the capital, or the night cries or the

screams piercing the lonesome corridors of the Colosseum?

Let Paul the Apostle, this angel of the third heaven, come down tonight and contemplate the scenes of his life and death and the perennial fonts of water where issued the unfailing springs that yet endure and give unceasing fertility to the place of his execution.

"And after some days when Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard of him the faith which is in Christ Jesus. And as he discoursed of justice, and chastity, and of the judgment to come, Felix was terrified and answered: 'For the present, go; but at a convenient time I will call thee.' He hoped that money would be given him by Paul, for which cause, also, oftentimes he sent for him, and spoke with him." (Act: XXIV; 25, etc.)

These were the tremendous issues upon which St. Paul addressed Felix and Drusilla who called in judgment to defend himself when he would defend the faith in Christ and free himself from the bonds with which he was secured, lest he should effect his liberty and vindicate himself against the charges which had been alleged against him. No wonder that before such a man Felix trembled. For con-

scious of innocence he knew that he had nothing to fear from the terrors of human justice except that he might have to imitate Christ Jesus in dying for his faith and innocence.

But what wonder that he did not fear to discuss before that awful tribunal justice, temperance, and a judgment to come, suggested of his own declaration. For we shall all be manifested before the tribunal of Christ that every one may receive according as he hath done good or evil.

Certainly before such a tribunal of injustice and iniquity a judgment approved of God had little scope or freedom of conscience. Everything would be clearly manifested before the assembled gathering.

Little wonder that the pagan Felix and his incestuous Drusilla, both steeped in immorality, trembled before the lightning strokes of the reproaches of Paul from which they would willingly sink into the earth, afraid of the anger of the Most High; and Felix would beg to hear Paul another day and Drusilla would lower herself in the destruction of the iniquitous court and courtesans. Little hope had he of seeing or hearing Paul another day; too well would they be pleased never to hear him again.

A true preacher of the Gospel announcing the word of God; a conscience disturbed and fearful. A sinner animated by the alarm of God's judgment ready to inflict upon him sovereign and condign punishment. Before them St. Paul preached in thunder and lightning strokes enough to alarm them to the very soul. Felix was of a mercenary soul; Drusilla was a Jewess who had abandoned her husband in search of regal pomp and magnificence; it was for money that Felix sought Paul in hope of piling up his treasures. Before such a tribunal of pride, avarice, impurity, covetousness, luxury, worldly pomp, did Paul preach. If they mind no less a conscience than that of Paul, what will disturb the hearts of such a coterie?

During the days of his flesh, St. Paul endured every manner of suffering on every side, as may be seen by reading his letters to all parts of the world, especially by his letters to the Thessalonians; by his exposure to the wild beasts at Philippi; to threats of vengeance; by his trials by sea; by sufferings unto blood; the perils of shipwreck; by being buried in the deep; by lashes, save the one, the fortieth, which could not be lawfully inflicted; by escaping in a basket. But who can describe or

portray the battles, sieges, fortune, or the poignant vicissitudes of the long life of the Apostle after Christ's apparition to him till he fell by decapitation by the bloody sword of the executioners of himself and of his companion, Peter, executed with his head downward to observe respect towards Christ his Master. When Christianity would strike down the imperial majesty of the Roman eagles, it was Paul whom the Church made use of to crush the imperial majesty of Rome. His immortal Epistle to the Romans became the noblest of his writings, and the epitaph which was to transmit his doctrine and graphic eloquence to all the nations into which the empire was being disintegrated and dismembered; and its debris strewed on every sea and in every province from East to West, from North to South, wherever any vestige of the empire after its long 750 years was found.

The marvellous appearance of Christ to Paul on his road to Damascus was the crowning point and irresistible testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ. There is no shifting the overwhelming proof of such irrefragable God-given miracle as this, enough to silence every adversary, and put to flight the cavillations of the sceptic and infidel, and put the

Church upon an irremovable and impregnable foundation as strong as the rock foundation of Peter's undying faith and security and confirmed love. "When thou art confirmed, confirm thy brethren," was the last solemn injunction of the Savior of men.

It is no very easy matter to determine what is meant by the words of the Apostle that he knew a man in Christ whether in the body or out of the body he knew not, but God knoweth, now upwards of fourteen years ago, whether the years have to be counted from the Damascine visitation or subsequent on one of the following years up to when he spoke; that such a man whether in the body or out of the body he knew not that a man was transported to the third heaven and heard words or heard things that it was not given to men to utter or comprehend—that he was carried aloft to the third heaven; what was meant by the third heaven? Was it beyond the celestial sphere that surrounds and limits the circumference or sphere that separates the heavens and the firmament thereof? Was it the horizon visible or invisible that marks off and separates the lofty sphere that denotes the lofty heavens beyond which he was carried into the very presence and inmost bosom of the eternal and loving

God—even into His very bosom and was embraced in the arms of the ever-loving and eternal God? Who will explore or even fully make known to us this heavenly occurrence of the Omnipotent Creator? No wonder that Paul did not know whether he was transported within the flesh or out of the flesh; that God alone could tell and describe his sublime whereabouts in God or with God's omnipotence or in the compass of divine shadows.

We can as little or even less comprehend what Paul says lest he should become a castaway. How could it ever become possible that the great Apostle could ever become a castaway or one lost to his God and his beloved Christ, who had done so much to save, as appearing in the glory of the eternal Father? To whom the solemn rebuke was addressed, "Paul, Paul, why persecutest thou Me? I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest. Go and be baptized in My name. For I have great works for you for the salvation of men." And he sought the man designated to be the instrument of his salvation, and the salvation of all men, Jew and Gentile, and the foundation of His Church.

But what fear could Paul for a moment entertain of his own perdition or that of those

for whom he suffered and died with the blessed martyr Peter, crucified with his head downwards so as not to imitate his Master. Has he not surpassed all languages and powers of speech when he declared that neither hunger nor thirst nor nakedness nor the sword nor things created can separate him from Christ Jesus his Lord and God, and his Jesus blessed forevermore.

Discourse on St. Paul

PART II

St. Paul was a Jew of the race of Abraham of the tribe of Benjamin. His father was of the sect of the Pharisees. He had a sister and a nephew. He was circumcised the eighth day after his birth, according to the law of Moses, and was named at first Saul; but he took the name of Paul. He was born in Tarsus, a celebrated city of Cilicia, the metropolitan city at that time; he always had much affection for the house of the Caesars, even giving them the name of Julieope for the sake of Julius Caesar, who, having suffered during the time of the assassination of Caesar, Cassius being Master of Africa, and having lost all their property and goods which they possessed, no less common than personal. Augustus felt himself obliged to compensate their losses; thus he favored them as much as Caesar had maltreated them.

Paul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel and was instructed in a manner the most exact and diligent to know and observe the law of Moses. In honesty and good faith about the

year 35 he was persecuting the Church. At this time he had shown remarkable zeal for God, or rather for the law and Jewish traditions, and in that he had surpassed a great part of those of his own age. It was his zeal that distinguished and made him a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an outrageous enemy of the Church. Not for love of doing evil, but for the sake of doing what seemed to him good did he carry on this war to the death against Christ and His anointed.

Conspicuous above all whom Paul persecuted and who fell before his wrath and became the object of his merciless fury was Stephen the deacon, who in his office ministered to the service of the faithful. In cruel measures and unceasing persecutions, leading to death by stoning, Paul took a pronounced, prominent and sanguinary part; he held the clothes of the young deacon while the ruffian crowd hauled and dragged and stoned him to death. To all this treatment Stephen submitted with no other imprecation upon his lips or in his heart than the words: forgive them for they know not what they do. And looking up he saw the heavens opened and the Son of God standing on the right hand of God. Thus St. Paul became an accessory to the martyrdom of St.

Stephen in agony that would pierce the heavens for vengeance; but Jesus had reserved Paul for even greater works that would eventually compensate for all the wrongs that Stephen endured, and accepted the even as great sacrifice for Jesus as Stephen himself underwent. So that side by side they stood before the Lord Jesus and made atonement to the world by shedding their blood and enduring suffering.

Great as was the martyrdom of Stephen even greater was that of Paul after his conversion and before he was crowned with the martyr's crown. It is not easy to say who was the greater in God's sight. As it is written that greater than John had not been born of woman; so, we may truthfully say that greater had not been crowned with everlasting glory than Stephen, Paul and John the Baptist.

The decisive fact in Paul's life was his conversion from persecutor to Apostle and Doctor of the nations, and his subsequent wonderful career. This is all recorded in Paul's own account in the Acts of the Apostles as narrated by St. Luke at the instance of St. Paul. He who would become at all familiar with this wonderful fact in the career and before

the Conversion of St. Paul must pause and reflect seriously upon this great consummation effected upon St. Paul when he set out on the road to Damascus. It is to be dwelt upon in every detail and is the manifest work of Jesus Christ.

No more stupendous work of God is to be found in the whole history of the Old and New Testaments. Not since the miracles of Christ, and His vivid fulfillment of all phophecy, not since Christ was nailed to the Cross—not since the voice of God was heard on Mt. Zion proclaiming the law either old or new; not since Moses horned with divine glory and carrying the tablets of the law from Zion and announcing them as the consummate law made known to men, and calling upon all the children of men to be obedient thereto; not since Christ died on the Cross and rose again for our resurrection—nothing whatever can surpass the greatness and majesty coming in the clouds of heaven, and exclaiming, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me," and the divine reply of Jesus: "I am Jesus of Nazareth Whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the goad." "Lord what will Thou have me to do?" And the immediate answer, "go into the house of Ananias in the

way called Straight, and it will be told you what to do." For it was not for Christ from His throne and glory to give Paul all the circumstantial details which should accompany Him in His descent to St. Paul. Paul was thrown from his horse. He and those who were with him heard the voice of Jesus, they were surrounded with a brilliant light, but they saw nothing. "Arise, go seek Ananias, and he will tell you what to do."

Paul arose and with his companions, made his way into Damascus where he remained blind for three days. Here he preached Jesus Christ for the time he sojourned there, in spite of their attempts to kill him.

Not since the voice of God was heard from heaven proclaiming that He Who was just baptized by John was His only begotten Son and proclaiming Him as such; not since the Eternal Father was heard a few nights before His passion and death—not since the same voice was heard in answer to His prayer for glorification, I have glorified and will still glorify Thee—not since the consummation on the Cross of Christ's atonement for men's redemption, has there ever been afforded to men clearer and more undisputable evidence of Christ's divinity than that marvellous exhibition in the

heavens of the Son of God vouchsafing to call upon Saul and to reproach him for his persecution. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me;" and Saul's reply, "Who art thou, Lord." "I am Jesus of Nazareth Whom thou persecutest, it is indeed hard to kick against the goad."

The Jews had never forgotten the word of Christ that He would rise again. Hence, when He expired on the cross, the soldiers went to Pilate with the threat: "Sir, we remember that when that seducer was still alive He declared that He would rise again; and we therefore desire that the tomb be made secure lest the last error should be worse than the first." "Go, thou hast a guard, go guard it as you will." Hence the greatest vigilance was employed by the soldiers to guard the sepulchre. Not only this, but they were put in custody during the night and until Jesus rose again. The soldiers to show that they had been faithful to their trust, pretended that they had been corrupted by the Jews to say that the disciples came and stole away the body while they slept on their post of duty. Diligent search was made on every hand; on every side, in the neighborhood of the tomb, and in every nook and corner from and throughout Jeru-

salem search was made in the hope of retrieving their error, and throughout every part of Jerusalem to the bounds of Judea, all Jerusalem was alert to find the body dead or alive of Him Who had declared this resurrection; the reward was increased, then the diligence made fourfold, and this not only to find the missing one, but for the sake of relieving the soldiers and exonerating them from blame which the Jews were desirous of accomplishing, as it would have relieved the soldiers of discredit and at the same time prove that Jesus had not risen, but was dead forever; thus Israel's last hope would have perished and the crucifixion was real and the punishment deserved. And that Christ could take His own time for His mock or simulated sacrifice and death and sham redemption, which it was indeed if Christ's had not been real and divine.

The efforts of the Jews to recover Christ's body, and that too by money, and the utter failure was a mockery down the ages and rendered the Jews and their abortive abusive efforts silly and ludicrous and made them the laughing stock of Judea and the Gentiles for many centuries, so that no one ever credited the finding of such a body come back to life from the dead.

Christ had indeed truly risen. The world had believed in the Risen Christ, and men staked their hope and faith for all time upon it. The rest of men were content to base their faith upon these truths. This in itself would have been one of the greatest of all miracles if itself were not the most stupendous of miracles, as it was necessarily and luminously. The creation of the world was a supreme work of God; the conversion of men was no less the work of God; being led into the admirable light of the Gospel in spite of human passion and the darkness of sin was no less but even more the consummation of divine power. If men sought miracles to justify or induce their embracing the Gospel here, their spontaneous acceptance of it, and the conversion of the world, without constraint, was itself the greatest of all miracles, adequate proof that dispensed with any other argument as being the concrete exhibition of divine truths clearly the work of God's own right hand. Such called for proof would be useless as demanding to comprehend what is incomprehensible and which must ever stand upon the unchangeable word of God. The divine word is not strengthened by any evidence outside of itself. External evidence may be and is necessary to

lead us to the truth, but beyond that it may not go, intrinsic proof is in the thing itself, and is the proper object of revealed truth.

As the truth of Christ's resurrection was not a visible, palpable fact to each and every man, but to as many witnesses as it pleased God to manifest it, the rest of men were bound to accept it upon the testimony of these witnesses: so, similarly, those of the generation who succeeded the apostles had to accept it on the testimony of those who went before, and who lived with, ate with, touched and talked and spent the time with Christ which preceded His ascension, that is the forty days prior to His return into heaven.

Thus the moral equilibrium of the world would be retained, and no disturbance would ensue from confusion that otherwise might follow to disturb the order and providence which God had already established for the governance and conservation of human society. For it were folly to believe that Christ should remain forever on earth to give all future generations the testimony which He was pleased to give only to those of His own. This would have subverted society, destroyed faith and inspired necessarily when and where He would be worshipped by the spontaneous

virtues of faith, hope and charity, which He came into the world to plant in the hearts of mankind; which could only flourish in an indigenous soil and freedom for the mind and soul and their aspirations.

While St. Paul after his conversion was ardently opposed to the Jews, his confreres, yet he never showed the rancour towards them which might have been expected or the malignity which frequently distinguishes the convert from those with whom he was fellow-religionist and with whom he once worshipped in the same belief; still less with the malignity that sometimes marks the true worshipper in spirit and truth from the newly converted. This is shown by the zeal with which he instructed his followers to lay by weekly alms for the support of the poor Jews in Jerusalem to whom he would have it dispensed every week in his visits. Having been made Apostle with Barnabas his first thoughts were for the poor Jews in Antioch, then from the first called Christians.

And this, too, when having preached at Antioch, and at Illium, Iconium, the Jews sought to kill him; from which danger he only escaped by being lowered down the walls in a basket. Thus he escaped the plots and

ambushes laid for him by those who sought his destruction and the silence of his tongue. Soon and shortly after God called him to Macedon, the foremost nation of Greece, which had been successfully ruled by Philip and his son Alexander.

After his conversion, his first care was to be instructed and baptized by Ananias to whom Christ sent him. After this began his long career of labors and miracles begining with the restoration to sight of the blind man; and his miraculous rescue from the sea off Malta, and his promise that if they stood to their vessel they would not be lost, and every one of them escaped the whirlwind that threatened to engulf them.

From the seas and the oceans that lie to the north of Europe and form its appropriate boundary through the continent to the Mediterranean whose waters wash the shores of Africa and Carthage, in extent more than 2500 miles, while on the west the Atlantic waters hid the then unknown quarter of the earth whither the spirits of the dead were believed to be ferried at night into Britain guarded by the Styx, while on the east the Roman Empire extended far into and covered the immense and incalculable region which was protected by ancient

renown and disciplined valor, within these four quarters were comprehended all that was fairest and most civilized in the time of Christ and the days of St. Paul. This vast region was and had been for centuries the predestined seat and home of Christianity. Indeed it would seem that from little beyond those limits did religion and reign of Christ proceed. It would appear that in the providence of God the empire was prepared for the propagation and permanent dwelling place for the Incarnate Word when He came on earth to consummate our salvation. Even yet a great portion of the earth has not been civilized, much less refined, has remained stranger to more than two-thirds of the world's population—as destitute of civilization as if none but the angels ever looked upon it.

The empire would seem to have invited by its wondrous means of transportation and by the celerity with which it was travelled, and by its great military roads which extended every way and coalesced the almost limitless territory into one. This was not the time of the automobile, but no locomotive could surpass the rapidity with which its great armies under the control of surpassing discipline could descend into the low places or ascend the moun-

tains, or scale with lightning-like speed which carried vast bodies of men incredible distances. All ways met in Rome, and Rome by its powers of locomotion met all places and brought them into subjection to the imperial city.

Into this vast region St. Paul forced himself. Over it all did he carry his missionary career—from Jerusalem to Antioch, and Tarsus, Thessalonia, the country of the East and Mesopotamia; to the Ephesians and Corinthians. Again to Tarsus, back again to Corinth. No sea, no desert, no military road passed or unscaled by the Apostle and his companions. The angels stood by and gave him successive safeguards when, to human appearances, there was nothing but peril and death and barbarians at hand. Not a man of you will perish if you be faithful at my word, and the angels who stand by to guard us all, and lead us safe from the storm at Malta or the perils of land and stormy seas which was his continual hope and safety and preservation. Even the wild beasts at Ephesus with whom he had to contend presented no fear for him. Even Nero himself could not condemn Christ's soldier.

From there he took himself to Tarsus and

shortly after made his visit to Antioch. From there, after having preached for some years, and after years of travel, labors and unceasing preaching of the gospel and making tents, accompanied with working of miracles, he set out to see Peter, whom he had never seen, lest, as he says, he should have run in vain or astray in his ways or doings or doctrines; whenever he returns to Tarsus he returns with affection to his native hearth.

This affection would not seem to have been reciprocated by the Tarteans. For they laid traps for him, and sought to murder him, or force him to close his tongue in the new teaching of Jesus which he had espoused, and in which he never grew tired, from the period of the apparition in broad day until he could dampen his ardor in the blood of martyrdom, or silence his speech by the divine eloquence which never ceased to flow from him to answer all questions and to vindicate the Gospel which after his baptism he was sent to announce to all men, Jew and Gentile, which to the one was a folly and to the other a stumbling block, but which to all called it was the very power of God and the wisdom of God, that no flesh should glory in His sight.

The tongues of men and angels could not

equal, much less surpass, the divine effluence which issued from Paul in his discourses on faith and charity and hope on these occasions and during the whole of his missionary career.

This career carried him into all parts whither the spirit led for all the years of his mission and all the peoples to whom he felt himself divinely sent.

Time and again, and indeed unceasingly, were there attacks made upon him to quench his zeal and bridle his utterance, and to bring him back to the teachings of the Old Law, to end this folly of his to abjure the living God, the God of his fathers as the Jews termed him. But Paul had seen Jesus of Nazareth standing at the right hand of the Father; nothing could oppose the light and influence of the divine apparition. It was in his zeal and because it seemed to him the truth that he persecuted Christ and sought to quench the seed of the Gospel. Once convinced of the truth, he was as one impelled, so to speak, from the bonds of this world in his mad impetuosity to make known the truth which he had seen and to save the souls of all those Jews and Gentiles for whom Jesus died and had willingly shed His blood. For these Paul would even seek salvation and become anathema from Christ for the

sake of his brethren for whom Christ had not hesitated to die and for whom Paul would have risked salvation rather than that one of these redeemed by the Savior's blood should be lost. Paul would have thought little of his own salvation if the salvation of his brethren were not an essential part of the wondrous economy according to which the Messiah would have all men saved, freely and spontaneously.

Romans: XII; 9-21.

"Let love be without dissimulation, abhor evil, cleave to good; love one another with brotherly love; preferring one another in honor. Not slothful in solicitude; fervent in the Spirit; serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; instant in prayer; communicating to the necessities of the Saints; pursuing hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Be of one mind, one towards another; not high-minded, but condescend to the lowly. Be not wise in your own conceit. Render to no man evil for evil; provide good things (not only before God, but also) before all men. If it be possible as much as in you, have peace with all men. Do not revenge yourselves, dearly beloved, but give place unto

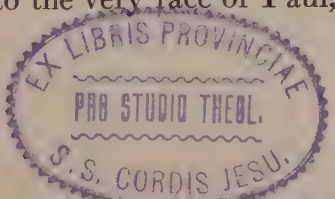
wrath; for it is writen; vengeance is Mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

He traveled everywhere, preaching the Gospel wherever he went. His speeches were wondrous conceptions spoken on the moment and by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Athens was in his course and to Athens he went. He would preach the word on the very altar of the unknown God. Among his many hearers Paul could not be averted from but rather drawn to an object so interesting in itself, so pregnant with the philosophy suggested by such an altar. An altar erected to the unknown God. Could it be that such a being as an unknown God was unknown and unheard of in the midst of the high civilization which Athens vaunted? Or was it the truth thus enunciated—the truth of the existence of the eternal God which had found a lodgment in the souls of the Athenians that arrested the attention of Paul and compelled him to tarry and look with amazement and even worship upon the religiousness of the Athenians. "Ye men of Athens, I perceive

that in all things ye are somewhat superstitious." Or rather did not Paul fall prostrate before the unknown God and worship Him according to the dictates of his conscience, and give God thanks for having led this pagan though civilized people to recognize what they could not deny. Paul pauses before all the altars, but he stops when he beholds that erected before the unknown God. For that unknown God was no unknown God to him; for he had been struck down in the broad day and brought to such a knowledge by the visible apparition of the real true God Himself Who appeared to him and converted him to the knowledge of the true God till then unknown to Paul but now his blessed God and Creator, blessed forever.

Many were the objects of interest to be seen by a mind such as Paul's. He marched through the Acropolis; he listened to the discourses of the peripatetic school. He could without effort see the statue of Demosthenes while just opposite he would have seen Eschylus, who defeated his right to the crown for rousing his countrymen by his eloquence; if he tarried he might have even seen Diogenes peering into every face, perhaps he held his lantern up to the very face of Paul, and from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his Judaical features may have imagined that he had at last found the man whom he sought; yet he hardly realized that the Jew he saw was ready to discourse on the Scriptures and from them to prove that Jesus of Nazareth whom the Jews had banished and persecuted and sought to murder was the Son of true God made man for the redemption of the world.

PART III

What would such a man have to do in Athens among the tombs and monuments of by-gone ages?

Whatever was Paul's motive, he was in Athens and sought to preach to Jew and Gentile, for to all he was a debtor. For what was he travelling through the world in all God's habitable globe? What brings him before kings and philosophers? Where more fittingly can he announce his God and Master, than before the unknown God, so little known? Paul might have discoursed in Plato's hearing and his accents could not fail to fascinate him.

It cannot be expected that we should study or even pass in review all the circumstances and events with which the life of St. Paul is replete from the day when Christ appeared to him and wrought his conversion, his baptism by Ananias to the hour when tried and acquitted before Nero, subsequently to be tried and convicted before that tyrant, when he fell under the executioner's sword making the

spots bedewed by his blood consecrated, from each of which issued the springs of water which still exist—this within a few days when his companion Peter was crucified with his head downward out of humility and unwillingness to assume the posture which his Divine Master had cheerfully undergone. Nor do we think that such treatment detailed of our subject while suitable for a book would be the most useful for a panegyric such as we expect to write in honor of our glorious Saint.

We will be more than satisfied if we can place before your devout contemplation some of the salient points and most striking incidents in the wonderful career of the Apostle of the Gentiles and the convert of Jesus Christ Who had reserved him for such gigantic labors and inexhaustible resources and made him the instrument of salvation and co-operator in the saving of untold nations and men in the work of the redemption, enabling him, as Paul himself says, to fill up by his sufferings what was wanting to the sufferings of Jesus Christ Himself. Among these stands pre-eminent the conversion of St. Paul as the unfailing proof of the divinity of Him who made the Apostle His handiwork in supplying the nations with such luminous and in-

dubitable testimony of His divine power and mercy and grace.

Who that carefully reads the conversion of St. Paul effected by Christ can ever dare to question the divinity of Him. Who on that day on the way to Damascus, and beholding all that was seen or heard, can fail to realize that it was Jesus of Nazareth whom Paul persecuted?

Not since Jesus appeared before Caiphas and in reply to the latter's question whether He be the Son of God, declared that He was, for Caiphas affirmed it, and that he would see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with power and majesty; not since nor until this prediction be fulfilled and Christ shall come has there been or will there be such a scene as that which was presented to the astonished Paul when he saw the heavens opened and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and declaring that He was Jesus of Nazareth whom he persecuted, nor until Christ shall come again shall the heavens be made witness of such a scene.

Behold the heavens and earth stand still to behold this new coming of the Son of God. The clouds become luminous, angels are amazed, the spirits stand awestruck, all the

choirs of heaven reverberate with the words, I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest.

What wilt thou have me to do? Go to Ananias and be thou baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And Paul on the word, eyes plucked, prostrated to the ground, probes his way from his fallen horse and seeks the waters of baptism at Ananias' hands. No greater picture brings this home to men than that which stands over the door of this church to remind and perpetuate the conversion of the persecutor Paul, now made the disciple of Jesus Christ. What sublime evidence of the divinity of Christ who achieved so great a consummation!

How and where did St. Paul preach? I have already dwelt upon the characteristics of his preaching. He began preaching at once after his conversion. At once when risen from the ground where the mercy of God had overtaken him, as it overtook his mad career on the road to Damascus whither he was bent wreaking murder and vengeance against his former fellow-Jews and bent upon their extermination for renouncing the faith of their fathers, and after partaking in the martyrdom of St. Stephen, he pushed on to Damascus where the Jews attempted his murder, from whose hands he narrowly escaped, he began to

announce the Jesus of Nazareth whom he had till then bitterly outraged and subjected to cruel punishment. He was no longer the violent persecutor and unjust slaughterer, but under the grace and influence of his Divine Master would declare Him everywhere he went and to all men. Having left Damascus he journeyed to Antioch whence Christians first took their name. Thence he travelled into various parts where he knew that the Gospel was to be announced.

"Now I, Paul, myself beseech you by the meekness and modesty of Christ, who in presence indeed am lowly among you, but absent am bold towards you. But I beseech you, that when present I may not be bold with the confidence with which I am thought to be bold against some, who judge of us as if we walked according to the flesh. For though we walk in the flesh, we war not after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty to God for the destruction of fortresses, destroying counsels. And every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. See the

things according to appearance. If any man hath confidence in himself that he is Christ's, let him think this again with himself, that as he is Christ's, so also are we. For, even if I shall glory somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed. But that I may not be thought, as it were, to terrify you by letters; for the letters, they say, are indeed weighty, and strong, but the bodily presence weak, and the speech contemptible. Let such a one consider, that such as we are in word by letters, when absent, such also in deed, when present. For we dare not class ourselves, or compare ourselves, with some who commend themselves; but we ourselves measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves with ourselves. But we will not glory beyond measure; but according to the measure of the rule, by which God hath measured to us, a measure to reach even to you. For not, as if we reached not to you, do we stretch ourselves forward; for we are come as far as to you in the gospel of Christ. Not glorying beyond our measure in other men's labors; but having hope that when your faith is increased, we shall be magnified in you according to our rule abundantly. To

preach the gospel even to those places which are beyond you, not to glory in another man's rule, in things prepared. But let him who glorieth, glory in the Lord. For not he who commendeth himself is approved; but he whom the Lord commendeth." (II Cor.: X; 1-18.)

"Would to God you could hear a little of my folly, but even hear me: For I am zealous for you with godly zeal. For I have espoused you to one man, to present a chaste virgin to the Christ. But I fear, lest as the serpent seduced Eve by his subtlety, so your thoughts be corrupted, and fall away, from the simplicity which is in the Christ. For if he who cometh, preach another Christ, whom we have not preached; or ye receive another Spirit, whom ye have not received; or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye would suffer him rightly. For I think that I have done nothing less than the great apostles. For, although rude in speech, yet not in knowledge, but in all things we are made manifest to you. Or did I commit a sin, humbling myself, that ye might be exalted, because I preached to you the Gospel of God gratuitously? I stripped other churches, taking support for your service. And when I was with you, and in want, I was burdensome to no one; for that which was

wanting to me the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied; and in all things I kept and will keep myself from being burdensome to you. The truth of Christ is in me, that this glorying shall not be broken off in me in the countries of Achaia. Wherefore? Because I love you not? God knoweth. But that which I do, I will also do, that I may cut off the occasion of those who wish an occasion, that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such false apostles are crafty workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself transformeth himself into an angel of light. It is, therefore, no great thing, if his ministers be transformed as ministers of justice, whose end shall be according to their works. Again I say, let no man think that I am foolish, otherwise take me as foolish, that even I may glory a little. That which I speak, I speak not according to God, but as in folly in this matter of glorying. Since many glory after the flesh, I also will glory. For ye willingly suffer the foolish, whereas ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer if anyone bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take, if a man exalt himself, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as

though we had been weak in this respect. Wherein any one is bold, I speak foolishly, I am bold also. They are Hebrews, I also; they are Israelites, I also; they are the seed of Abraham, I also. They are ministers of Christ, I speak as foolish, I more so; in many more labors, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often." (Cor. 11; 1-23.)

Not according to the rules of the schools did he make known the divine Word. Nor as I have intimated did he employ the profane of human learning, but thoroughly penetrated with the truths of salvation and the precepts of the Gospel he sought to win souls to Jesus Christ and to Him crucified. By the words of the Gospel of Christ that went forth from it to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Gentiles folly, did he proclaim the necessity of divine faith in Jesus Christ and the sovereign efficacy of the words of Him Who would draw all things to Himself and impart salvation to all who were to be drawn to the Eternal Father.

Not then by the power of speech but by the power of grace did Paul seek to plant everywhere the seed and obtain the harvest of truth and salvation.

Thoroughly penetrated with divine faith since the light which flooded his soul in Damascus, and feeling beyond all peradventure the divinity of his Lord and the vanity of all human concerns and the necessity of faith in Christ for all who would be saved, he devoted the rest of his years to Jesus Christ and the spread of His Word throughout the world and in the individual hearts of all who were to be saved.

Antioch was no limit for his zeal; but from Antioch to Macedonia, to Macedon, to Corinth which last he visited twice, to Thessalonia, to Ephesus where he struggled with the wild beasts, to Rome, where he was anxious to impart some spiritual gift and become a sharer of Peter, everywhere, and no bounds were too restricted, no labors too immense, no obstacles too unsurmountable, perils by sea, perils by land, dangers beyond counting, perils from robbers, perils from barbarians, perils from shipwreck, perils from the depths of the sea—everywhere did St. Paul encounter and overcome all for the sake of Jesus Christ. (I do not pretend to give the words but the sense of the Sacred Scriptures.)

St. Paul preached everywhere, to the civilized and to the uncivilized, to the bondman and

the freeman, to the barbarian who took him for a god, to the Gentile and the Jew, to the Greek and the Roman, to those who expected to see him fall dead because of the poisonous contact with venomous serpents, to which Paul's touch was their cure and salvation which was tested by the fire into which he shook them off, and thus showed himself immune from the deadly contagion; so that those who took him for an evil spirit came to look upon him as a supreme being. Thus he was forced to command them to look upon him as a man like themselves. We are men of like passions with yourselves, in nothing resembling them but their common nature, and in no way resembling the divinity.

Among the uncounted places which was opened up to the Apostle, was Lycia and Lystra. Nothing but the assurance of the Apostle could inspire hope or prospect of safety in the perilous waters of the sea near Malta. This alone could save them from casting themselves into the sea and being lost. "Be faithful and not a man of you will be lost," said he, "for my angels have stood by me and pledged you all security." And thus it was; the waters obeyed the word of Paul and all came off and sought security under his protecting

arms, but with a gentle reproach for not putting trust in his word and reliance on his God. Even the vessels escaped damage when lightened of the unnecessary merchandise and weight.

Among the miracles, stupendous and countless, which Paul wrought at these places, he cured the paralytic who had suffered for a long period and who was unable to use his limbs, and needed help to be moved. These invalids thus overcome with gratitude and thankfulness wanted to adore Paul as a divine being, but which he imperiously forbade, for he was of a human nature with his healers and restorers. And yet such is the inconstancy of the fickle heart that they were about to stone him and leave him for dead out of base ingratitude, and lack of true faith and of impulse towards God their Creator and Benefactor. Such is what it is to be the caprice of human passion. So little did these appreciate the power of God working through the hands of Paul and his companions. Adoration and contempt which God made use of went together to fulfill the sovereign will of the Most High. The XIV Chapter of Tillemont narrates with exactness and fidelity the statement of this il-

lustrious historian, the first among Church historians.

About this time the Apostles and chief among them Peter and Paul, were called upon to decide a question of a perplexed and perplexing nature. Whether the foods allowed or not allowed were to be continued under the Christian dispensation. Peter, as the representative of the old law, would have all Jews abide by what had been from the beginning and which has come down to men as a part of their traditional inheritance from the prophets and from Moses, the great law-giver who had originally proclaimed the law and called upon all the children of Abraham to proclaim it and make it part of their Mosaic dispensation. Paul on the other hand as the great representative of the Gentiles who had been grafted upon the mystical body of Christ, and who were truly the inheritors of the New Law and the spiritual offspring from the loins of Christ as the restorer of humanity redeemed and washed clean in the blood of the Savior, stood out for the removing of all of the restrictions on the food of the people imposed by the law of Moses.

However warmly waxed the controversy be-

tween the old Jews and the new ones and Gentiles who had come into the fold of Christ, it did not last long. For a vision was seen to descend from heaven filled with all manner of meats and fishes and other food; with it was heard the voice from heaven addressed to all the disputants: "Take ye and eat," for with God there was to be no discrimination of foods, clean or unclean, acceptable or unacceptable, for all were to be one in Christ Who sanctified all and made them all of like import. This great matter was finally decided in the great Council of Jerusalem presided over by Peter and by Paul who inspired all its acts and deliberations.

Great beyond all calculations are the affairs of even a small nation; but incomparably greater the countless and intricate problems of a wondrously great government with all its departments and complicated labyrinth of mechanism which men have found necessary to the operation and effective working of a system meant to secure the peace, happiness and prosperity of a whole people; but how much greater the government, subtle and complicated, of a great church with its hierarchy and all its other wonderfully devised functions which are necessarily directed to the

government of men and the salvation of immortal souls upon which the spiritual and corporal existence of the human race hangs trembling in the balance. To all this is to be added the wondrous influences of divine grace—the study of universes, the avoidance of sin and guilt, the acquiring of faith and hope and charity—the three pillars that support the edifice of the Kingdom of Grace and the movements of divine authority in leading men to God and preserving them in their harmonious relations to their beginning, their subsistence, and their seeking the mysteries of God, in the Kingdom of Grace which Christ has introduced into the souls of the elect.

True government aims at charity and rests upon and is supported by charity, the triple bond that unites God and man in an unbroken oneness. Such government is benign, and is as far removed from tyranny as it is from licentiousness. Such authority is mild, gentle, far-reaching and is supported by the word and authority of God Himself. Anxiety and solicitation for the good of the faithful comprehended in its embrace is the lofty—is the deep, yet mighty arch that holds together the governed and the governors. That form of rule benignant yet authoritative, which gives

least sense of burden or oppression, and is easily endured, and is far removed from tyrannous exactness or cruel pain, and yet delights and satisfies the highest sense of freedom and independence, is the noblest form of rule and receives the highest aspiration. Such is the government of the Kingdom of Christ in whole or in part. What must have been the longing and solicitude of St. Paul for all the churches entrusted to his care and unceasing watchfulness; his superintendence and world-wide solicitude was not confined to one or a few provinces of the Universal Church, but extended inexhaustibly over all the nations of the earth which had been given to him from Christ as his inheritance and to be taught and made heirs of the Gospel.

Little wonder that he was burdened beyond measure with his continued solicitude and Christ-like care over the Church of Christ. Like the Sacrament that causes the grace of God to flow into the hearts of men, likewise the seven pillars that support the edifice of the Church had their foundations deep sunk into the virtues of faith, hope and charity, the perennial intercourse that subsists between God and Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and the souls of men.

Such benignity of government whether in Church or State makes the principle of authority reputable in itself and admirable to the whole world. When people see that all government is designed for their own welfare, and are not coerced by tyranny they honor the God-given establishment meant for themselves and their eternal and temporal welfare. No gratification of ignoble passion can have any play in such an exercise of power or evil-doing. They will cheerfully die for their country and Church, and find it sweet to pour out their blood for the good of their fellow men. They will deem no sacrifice or grief too much to conserve a government either profane or ecclesiastical for human liberty or human salvation or human prosperity.

What must have been the labors unceasing at all times, and laborious beyond measure to exercise the manner of government practiced by St. Paul. The solicitude of all the churches did always fall upon him and press to Herculean labors of which the Church at large had but little comprehension. The Philippians, the Thessalonians, the Corinthians; meeting the beasts at various places, in colosseums, and enduring suffering at their hands, at last escaping in a basket, he crossed into Macedon at the sug-

gestion of the Lord, he returned a second time to the Corinthians, writing to the Hebrews, to the Romans—all these various labors were but a small part of the onerous tasks which he undertook out of love for the brethren for whom he would willingly be anathematized—for whom he would willingly suffer and die.

Behold St. Paul's zeal for the help of the saints:

"Now concerning the collections that are made, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so do ye also. On the first day of the week let everyone of you put apart for himself, laying up what shall please, that when I come the collection be not then to be made."

The Acts of the Apostles are made up of thirty-eight chapters and these Acts are little else than the testimony of the life and days and perils of St. Paul from his conversion to his death. It would be impossible to draw out the history of the Apostle in the fifty chapters written by the learned Tillemont with an accuracy which has been well described as the accuracy of genius.

The grace of Christ introduced into the world the Kingdom of God. And he who was least in the Kingdom of God was greater it had been said than John the Baptist. But St.

John was indeed the forerunner of Jesus Christ in his sufferings and martyrdom and death. So that it is not easy to venture any comparison between the great Baptist and the great Apostle.

The Kingdom of God must ever abide and seek its light from the unfailing light of grace. Without this light the Kingdom of God cannot subsist and be perpetuated, as without care and vigilance and continual watchfulness the noblest temple cannot subsist.

We do not enough to simply preach; suffering is necessary to conquer our hardened hearts, and, callous as we are, because the words of Christ thus announced must soften the hardness of our hearts and the callousness of their sentiments. Suffering is the basis of religion; suffering is the very form of all religion. The virtue that has gone through the world narrates the stripes inflicted at every step. And because they fall short of the number required by Roman justice, the thirty-nine that yet remain is more than enough to signify the endurance and pains and agonies of St. Paul.

Converts innumerable were led into the Church. Whole populations, tribes, whole peoples were conquered by the Apostle's labors

and those of his comrades. There was no resisting the tide of conversion and persuasion that induced a majority of those who hung upon their persuasive accents. It was clearly the work of divine grace under the superintending providence of the Holy Ghost Who spoke as He had in ages gone by spoken through the prophets. From Jerusalem to Antioch, from Tarsus to Rome, from Corinth to all parts of Asia, to the countries of Europe, they stretched themselves from Spain to Gaul, back again to Macedonia, to the Corinthians twice over, to the Philippians, to the Thessalonians, in a word, to all to which the Spirit of God led or inspired them to go in search of those who would listen to the Gospel. For to all they were debtors in Christ Jesus.

Among most of these people they encountered fierce and persistent opposition; they suffered cruelty unheard of from which they would naturally recoil except that sense of duty and even martyrdom would impel them to lay down their lives, and shed their blood, amidst the bitterest torments, suffering even lashes, stonings, imprisonment and every manner of suffering ever endured, for sake of Jesus the Lord and Redeemer. For they felt that they were not above their Master, and that

these inflictions were to be endured as He had endured every species of torment and agony. For it had been told them that they would be driven from place to place; and when thus treated they should go from one place to another and that not till the end would they have covered all the places where the Gospel was to be announced.

When we come to consider the marvellous apparition to St. Paul on the way to Damascus and of the miracles that transpired on that day to effect the conversion by the power of Jesus, the first thing that strikes us is the indubitable and luminous evidence which it affords of the divinity of Jesus Christ: and of the same evidence which it has afforded throughout all ages, so as to become a living monument of historic proof of that same divinity. We may even designate it as the crown and complement of all the testimony which is contained in the Acts of the Apostles in their bearing upon this vital fact of the first days of our faith.

On this apparition of Jesus, He did not at once cause his baptism. For as He did not come to baptize, but to teach, so Paul did not come to baptize but to instruct; as Philip, the deacon, did not descend from his chariot on

seeing open water with which he could at once have been baptized but waited until he had been made conversant with the Scripture taught by an inspired writer; so, Jesus would have Paul go into a certain house where he would find Ananias from whom he would receive baptism. This man was made to appear to Paul in a dream, so that he was afraid of Paul when he came to him. "Lord, I have heard many and dreadful things of this persecutor of thy faithful." No wonder he trembled at the appearance of such a man coming to be baptized by him. But the word of the Lord was sufficient for Ananias. "I have appointed him to do many and great works for the Gospel." He will achieve even greater works for it than he ever wrought against the Gospel. With the inspiration of Jesus working in his soul Ananias was at once led to instruct and pour the water of baptism of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the one-time persecutor of the Church and the faithful of Christ. In all times this apparition has been accounted one of the most decisive testimonies to rest and to silence all possible doubt as to the divinity of Jesus Christ. Faithful and faithless, believers and unbelievers, sceptics and incredulous have found in it the most satisfactory

foundation for their belief; so that it would be little short of folly to question such unimpeachable proof of the right hand of God. Such resplendent evidence, such overwhelming proof is more than abundant, and under extraordinary circumstances, all heaven bearing testimony as well as the company that attended Paul and heard all that he heard and saw all that he saw, even the horse under Paul, struck with the light and the scene all around, impelled to fury and uncontrollable wildness, and Paul lying flat upon the earth, and all filled with amazement with the opened heavens, all but a repetition of Stephen's standing at the right hand of the Father was indeed a stupendous scene with which to inaugurate Paul into the Church, even though his vision never caught a glimpse of the third heaven to which he was transported, whether at the time or fourteen years later when transported to the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body, he knew not; or in case he was a man in Christ, who came upon earth again to give Paul a new revelation, as He revealed the Presence of Christ again to him in the Eucharist. There is no book in the old or new testament in which is contained and set forth so much testimony of the truth as that which Paul

recorded in the Acts of the Apostles regarding the marvellousness of the appearance of Jesus Christ to St. Paul just before or on the hour of His inspiring him to no longer attempt the impossible task of kicking against the goad, and of receiving patience and enlisting among the faithful of Jesus Christ. Faith that can move mountains and renovate the world, Hope that has inspired all human souls, Charity for which St. Paul would give his body to be burned and his goods to feed the poor, vehement repentance and love of God; as great as the same virtues in the saints, virtually the same as in the saints, came down to restore mankind to his primal, original integrity and supernatural state in which he was once born or constituted the heir of heaven and sharer of everlasting destiny.

St. Paul was a man of fearless intrepidity. Earth or hell had no fear for him. Bravest among the brave whom no opposition could overcome and no power could bend or thwart from his undying purpose. Under this circumstance it is no easy matter to understand why he who feared no creature, and felt himself superior to all the powers that opposed him, and who exclaimed that neither death, nor hell nor things past nor things to come,

nor might, nor death could separate him from the love of Jesus Christ, it is I say, no easy matter to understand why he should tremble lest there should be given him the sting of the flesh; nor can we understand why he should be fearful lest he should be cast away and become a reprobate when he had preached so often and so successfully to all the nations of the earth. Whether in the flesh or out of the flesh, whether the fourteen years since he was transported to the third heaven, had been before or after Damascus, we can scarcely understand whether he was borne aloft to the first or second or the third heavens and saw that which it is not given to man to utter is no easy task for our feeble comprehension; yet this we know that whether in or out of the flesh, he was carried aloft to the very bosom of God and heard those things which he would fain describe. Nor can we believe that there could have been any base motion of the flesh that could have intimidated him or made him feel the least particle of danger for his eternal salvation or make him an anathema from Christ for his brethren. St. Paul did not rely upon his power of speech to make his utterance effective or soul-saving but he gave efficacy to his meaning by the well-worn hands

with which he earned his living in building sails.

Sight to the blind; health to the pro-consul, miracles of all kinds wrought upon every manner of human suffering were the gratuitous gifts which St. Paul conferred upon his disciples and the followers of Christ. Not even the wild beasts at Ephesus with which he engaged in deadly conflict presented any fear to the lion-hearted Paul.

Discourse on St. Paul

PART IV

To discourse on the character of St. Paul without a word on his sufferings would be indeed a very sorry panegyric on the great Apostle.

Hence having presented the character of St. Paul in various lights, I come to speak tonight to you some few words on the sufferings of this great servant of God and Apostle of the Gentiles.

We are all sufficiently familiar with the idea of suffering of whatsoever kind or nature. It may be suffering of the body, or suffering of the soul, or suffering of the mind. But whatever it is, whether mental or physical, suffering is always a most grievous trial to anyone and particularly to one who is of sensitive organism and who feels how others may be tried in various ways.

Suffering of the body, we all know, is of all sufferings the most grievous and terrific. Suffering of the mind may be even more grievous and less bearing, but suffering of the soul or

the solicitude that arises from anxiety and from the feelings that moved St. Paul to regret that he had to endure all the solicitude of all the churches, is of all sufferings, as will be readily granted, the most burdensome and most keenly felt.

But how am I to discourse in any worthy manner concerning these sufferings of various kinds of the great Apostle?

What must have been the eagerness and assiduous anxiety of the great Apostle in extending his administration or what he himself called his solicitude over all the churches? Few indeed, if any, are there who can approximate the great Saint in his administration of all the churches with which he was charged.

But who is he that possesses the rare gift of feeling eloquence to discourse on this great subject? No, not the tenderness of St. Bernard nor his wonderful oratory coming as it were from the clouds and rushing down the mountain side like a torrent emptying itself in the waters beneath; not Savonarola with his divine eloquence; not St. Peter Chrysologous. Even these can give us no idea of the tenderness, the pathos, which should accompany one in discoursing on the sufferings of St. Paul.

The divine words of the Prophet Isaias, the

onrushing eloquence of Daniel the Prophet, the lofty speech of St. John the Baptist, the speech of St. John Chrysostum, who so wonderfully cultivated the style and the manner of St. Paul, of all men, all declare to us what should be the guiding power of him who would speak of the glorious persuasion of Saint Paul the Apostle.

How am I to find suitable words to evoke from your hearts or to stimulate your souls to the speech which such a saint imperiously calls for?

What were the sufferings of St. Paul? Who can narrate them? Who can describe them? Who can enumerate them? How can we describe the heart throbs of the Saint when threatened with death by his own countrymen; causing himself to be lowered in a basket from the walls of the city, thus escaping an ignominious and cruel death?

How can we describe the trials of the Saint by sea and by land, the perils from which he escaped; the storms which he encountered in the Mediterranean and in all parts of the world? He commands the sailors, every man, to keep to his boat and that not one of them should be lost in the narrow straits between Scylla and Charybdis, situate between Sar-

dinia and the main land, so beset with peril to all sailing and the alarm of all traveling in those parts, always liable to robbers and pirates. It is a spot which tries men's souls and which St. Paul must have frequently met with both there and in all parts of the world.

How courageously did he shake off the serpent from the poisonous weed twisting itself around his arm and which the on-lookers expected to see destroy and poison and thereby end his usefulness? Instead of which St. Paul shook off the serpent into the fire and it perished, and he emerged safe and valiant from the poisonous reptile.

How are we to describe the attacks made upon St. Paul by the Philippians, the Thessalonians, by those in Macedon, the great kingdom where Alexander the Great ruled now instead of his father Philip of Macedon?

How about his travels from Antioch to Phrygia thence to Italy and to Thessalonia and going on into Spain, returning along the well-kept Roman post roads until he returns again to Tarsus, the land of his birth into which he always made haste whenever the opportunity presented itself, because he loved the country

where he was born and bred, and if necessary would willingly die for?

Have you read of the trials of the great Saint under Nero, the most cruel of emperors, before whom St. Paul was tried and before whom he was acquitted; but under whose subsequent reign he suffered death by decapitation, when his skull detached from his body flew with three bounds to the prison in which he had been confined causing three several springs to arise from the ground, which springs the writer has seen with his own eyes.

He tells us that he endured sufferings, hunger, thirst, and nakedness. In the Acts of the Apostles he speaks of being lashed with thirty-nine lashes, all but the one which it was forbidden by the Roman law to inflict; called before the Roman Emperor for trial they declared to him that a little more and he would have made them Christian; and but a little more and they would not have fallen short of being Christian.

Who can describe these heroic efforts?

"From the Jews I received five times forty stripes save one. Thrice I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the

deep. In journeying often, perils of rivers, perils of robbers, perils from my nation, perils from the Gentiles, perils in the city, perils in the wilderness, perils in the sea, perils among false brethren. In labor and distress, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness; besides the things that are without my daily charge, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I do not burn? If I must glory, I will glory in the things which concern my weakness. God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is blessed forever, knoweth that I do not lie. At Damascus the governor of King Aretas guarded the city of the Damascenes, to apprehend me. And through a window, in a basket, was I let down by the wall, and so I escaped his hands." (II Cor.: II; 24-33.)

Who cannot but sympathize or even much less comprehend the extent and bitter anguish of the sufferings of St. Paul? Who can describe the rush and vehemence of the eloquence of the fathers in their discourses on Paul's sufferings? Not the tender emotion of Bernard or Chrysostum can make it known.

There are various degrees and kinds of suffering—physical, mental and moral.

What were the piercing and known tortures which were ever before him always? Who can increase or gauge or feel the sufferings of the great Saint? the bitterness of the agony, the poignancy of the pain accumulated on his head from his persecution from the hands of the Jews to the Philippians and Thessalonians on his career through the world to the enemies whom he encountered and suffered from his own flesh and blood to Antioch and back again to Damascus, then to the known and habitable world? The old Roman roadways were hot with the speed and earnest pursuit and quick chase for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Cast among the wild beasts at Ephesus and made victim of the thrilling pangs and blows he yet emerged safe and all but unscathed from these monsters capable of every and all the basest inflictions.

Who, I ask, can adequately feel for and sympathize with such heroic deeds of valor and suffering past endurance? Who can measure out the bonds and the more than forty stripes but one which Roman justice did not dare go beyond? Perils met with on land and on sea, the battles, sieges, misfortunes already endured with their indefinite prospect for the balance of his life? Trials before tribunals,

administering justice, and dispensing with no measure of injustice, punishment.

The Acts of the Apostles is replete with the almost fabulous or incredible experiences of what he underwent for the Faith.

Who can declare the height and depth and breadth that pressed down and overflowed the measure of all that human torture could devise that the Apostle breasted with all the manliness of his character and the sacrifice of the highest and deepest feelings of Christian manhood.

And all this till the day when his decapitated head rebounded, touching the earth with its sanctity and fertile influence, till springs burst forth as emblems of the martyr's blood which peopled the whole Roman empire and made it sanctified as the hill of Calvary was bedewed with the blood of Jesus Christ which had not dried up nor ceased to saturate the sin-stricken earth.

I regret beyond measure that I am not the man, nor endowed with the necessary qualities to describe in glowing colors the sufferings of all kinds which the writer is called upon to show and paint, to speak adequately or even-passably so, when he would put before us this

part of the character and life and heroism of our great Saint.

Would that I might even feebly portray the harrowing tortures of him who endured with patience unmatched the thirty-nine stripes at the stake, short of the one which Roman justice did not permit to be inflicted. We know not the number and nature of those inflicted upon Christ at the pillar amidst the vilest and most ruffianly abuse and vituperation. We cannot imagine how such torture must have told upon and wrenched and all but overwhelmed the sensitive frame of the dear Lord Jesus. I forbear to mention the other and even more poignant flagellation which that gentle body had to bear with a divine heroism. St. Paul mentions that he supplied what was wanting in those tortures by those which he endured. What! Paul, sayest thou that even a blow was wanting in the body of Christ? No, surely not. Such is not the Apostle's meaning. But he would say that if anything could be wanting to the complete maceration of Christ's body, he, Paul, had more than supplied and compensated for all that the bloody malice had inflicted in a measure more than enough, and beyond measure.

Must I pass over the wild beasts amongst whom Paul was cast as in an amphitheatre where he was liable to be devoured. Yet nothing daunted, Paul willingly endured the risk and the agony, and like another St. Valentine, rushed into the massacre and by his sacrifice put a stop at once to the cruel sports of the gladiatorial shows.

I might continue the sufferings of St. Paul indefinitely, mentally, physically, morally, without even once approaching an end to his pangs and long and unceasing endurance. It would form a long narrative from Damascus, within its very walls over which in a basket he was lowered to escape his own countrymen, then on to Philippia, Thessalonia, Antioch, whence he set out again to middle Europe, and returned again to his beloved Antioch, the home of Peter and the cradle of Christianity; whence he would again pursue his long journey along the long Roman roads to the East. There he would lay down his unsupportable burden supported by Peter whom he had sought to consult, and even to resist if the truth called upon him to do so: "I resisted him to the very face," said he, speaking of Peter, his fellow Apostle, whom Paul did not feel himself to be inferior to, as the teacher of the Gen-

tiles and the teacher of the law both old and new; for which he would willingly die as their fathers had died before him, the successor of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

But it were immaterial to prolong this glorious narrative. Those who would must read it and grow familiar with it in the Acts of the Apostles given in full by St. Luke, the friend and associate of St. Paul, in whom he gloried and from whom he was never separated. Of all books of the New Testament there is none more profoundly interesting than the cyclopedia, so closely resembling Herodotus of Athens, in which is recorded in brilliant and picturesque words the story of Cyrus, King of Persia. But we cannot even for the graphic words of St. Luke stop longer to dwell upon this immortal and unceasing narrative much as we would desire it. Who has not read the Acts of the Apostles? What is there more interesting or more divine and picturesque in its drawings? In vain would you seek anything to be compared in its lifelike interest in the whole scope of the divine narrative. Be thankful to God that we have received so glorious a record, replete with everything so interesting and soul stirring.

While Paul escaped Nero's cruel rule, yet

a time came when he was tried with his confrere St. Peter and was beheaded; while Peter, out of respect for his Divine Lord (Whom he met at the Port of Flaminian in Rome, and who asked Jesus "Whither goest Thou, Lord," and Jesus made answer, "To Rome again, Peter, to be crucified"), was crucified with his head downward.

Who can utter just words of praise for the wonderful vehemence of speech and eloquence with which St. Paul defended himself and his Greek companions. He had indeed distinguished himself on the road to Damascus when Jesus appeared to him and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" Paul answered and said, "Who art Thou, Lord? and Jesus made answer, "I am Jesus of Nazareth Whom thou persecutest."

A glorious record was this supplying to the ages proof positive of the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it was as little compared with the sublime evidence with which Paul defended himself and his companions from Antioch to Rome and from Rome to Macedon and back again to Rome and from Rome a second time to the Corinthians and thence again to Tarsus. All these exhaustive travels to all parts of the world from the North Sea

to the Mediterranean, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the far-off country of Persia, embracing all the Roman empire, did Paul travel. No wonder that Peter exclaimed that there were many things in Paul that it was hard for those who read to understand, which the unwise and unwary wrestle as they do the other scripture to their own perdition.

Discourse on St. Paul

PART V

Hear Paul's own account of his life and conversion when called before the Council, the governor and King Agrippa, as set forth in the Acts of the Apostles:

And Paul, looking steadfastly on the council, said: Brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God, until this present day. And the high priest, Ananias, commanded those who stood by, to strike him on the mouth. Then Paul said to him: God will strike thee, thou whited wall. And thou sittest to judge me according to the law, and contrary to law dost thou command me to be struck? And those who stood by said: Revilest thou the high priest of God? And Paul said: I knew not, Brethren, that he is the high priest. For it is written: Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people. And Paul, knowing that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, cried out in the council: Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees; concerning a hope and resurrection of the dead I am judged. And when he had so said, a dis-

sension arose between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say, that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry. And some of the Pharisees, rising up, strove, saying: We find no evil in this man. What if a spirit, or an angel, hath spoken to him? And when there arose a great dissension, the commander, fearing lest Paul should be pulled in pieces by them, ordered the soldiers to go down, and take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle. And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said: Be constant: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so thou must bear testimony at Rome also. And when day was come, some of the Jews gathered together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying, that they would neither eat, nor drink, until they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty who had formed this conspiracy. And they came to the chief priests, and the ancients, and said: We have bound ourselves, under a great curse, to taste nothing till we have slain Paul. Now, therefore, do ye, with the council, signify to the commander that he bring him forth to you, as if ye meant to know

something more certain concerning him. But we, before he come near, are ready to kill him. But when the son of the sister of Paul heard of their lying in wait, he came and entered into the castle, and told Paul. And Paul, calling to him one of the centurions, said: Bring this young man to the commander, for he hath something to tell him. And he, taking him, brought him to the commander, and said: The prisoner, Paul, desired me to bring unto thee this young man, who hath something to say to thee. And the commander took him by the hand, and went aside with him privately, and asked him: What is it that thou hast to tell me? And he said: The Jews have agreed to ask thee, and thou wouldst bring forth Paul tomorrow into the council, as if they meant to inquire something more certain concerning him. But do not thou, give credit to them; for there lie in wait for him more than forty men of them, who have bound themselves, by oath, neither to eat, nor drink, till they have killed him: and they are now ready, looking for a promise from thee. The commander, therefore, dismissed the young man, charging him to tell no man, that he had made known these things to him. Then he called two centurions, and said to them: Make ready two

hundred soldiers, to go as far as Cesarea, the seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen, for the third hour of the night; And provide beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe to Felix, the governor. (For he feared, lest, perhaps, the Jews might take him away by force, and kill him, and he should afterwards be slandered, as if he was to get money.) And he wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias, to the most excellent governor, Felix, greeting. This man was taken by the Jews, and about to be killed by them, when I came in with the soldiery, and rescued him, having understood that he is a Roman. And wishing to know the charge which they made against him, I brought him forth into their council; whom I found to be accused concerning questions of their law: but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death, or chains; And when I was told of ambushes, that they had prepared for him, I sent him to thee, signifying, also, to his accusers, to plead before thee. Farewell. Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. And the next day, they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle. Who, when they come to Caesarea, and delivered the let-

ter to the governor, presented Paul also before him. And when he had read it, and had asked of what province he was; and understood that he was of Cilicia, I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are come. And he commanded him to be kept in the judgment hall of Herod. Acts—Ch. XXIII.

And after five days the high priest, Ananias, came down, with some of the ancients, and one Tertullus, a pleader, who went to the governor against Paul. And Paul, being called for, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying: Whereas, through thee, we live in much peace, and many things are corrected by thy providence, we accept it always and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. But that I may detain thee no longer, I desire thee, of thy clemency, to hear briefly. We have found this man to be a plague, and an exciter of seditions, among all the Jews, throughout the world, and ringleader (of the sedition) of the sect of the Nazarenes: Who also hath attempted to profane the temple: Whom we took, and would have judged according to our law. But Lysias, the commander, came on us with great violence, and took him away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come to thee: of him, by thy own examination, thou

mayest know concerning all these things, whereof we accuse him. And the Jews also added, and said that these things were so. Then Paul answered (the governor having made a sign to him to speak): Knowing that for many years, thou hast been judge over this nation, I will, with good courage, answer for myself. For thou mayest understand that it is not more than twelve days, since I went up to worship in Jerusalem: And neither in the temple did they find me disputing, with any man, or causing a concourse, of the people, neither in the synagogue, nor in the city: Neither can they prove to thee the things whereof they now accuse me. But this I confess to thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so I worship my Father and God, believing all things, which are written in the law and the prophets: And I have hope in God, which these themselves also cherish, that there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust. And herein do I endeavor to have always a conscience without offence towards God and men. Now after many years, I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings (and votive gifts). In which acts they found me, purified in the temple, neither with a crowd, nor with tumult. But certain Jews of Asia,

who ought to have been here before thee, and accuse me, if they had anything against me: Or let these men themselves say, if they found in me any evil, when I stood before the council, Unless it be for this one expression which I uttered aloud, standing among them: Concerning the resurrection of the dead am I judged by you this day. And Felix put them off, having most certain knowledge of this way, saying: When Lysias the commander, shall come down, I will hear you. And he commanded the centurion to keep him, and that he should be at ease, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering to him. And after some days, when Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard of him the faith which is in Christ Jesus. And as he discoursed of justice and chastity, and of the judgment to come, Felix was terrified, and answered: For the present, go: but at a convenient time I will call thee. He hoped, also, at the same time, that money would be given him by Paul; for which cause, also, oftentimes he sent for him, and spake to him. But when two years were ended, Felix had for successor Portius Festus. And Felix, willing to give pleasure to the Jews, left Paul bound. Acts—Ch. XXIV.

Now when Festus was come into the province, after three days he went up to Jerusalem from Cesarea. And the chief priests and principal men of the Jews went to him against Paul: and besought him, asking a favor against him, that he would command him to be brought to Jerusalem, they laying in wait in the way to kill him. But Festus answered: That Paul was in custody in Cesarea: and that he himself would very shortly depart thither. Let those, therefore, among you who are powerful, saith he, go down with me and accuse him, if there be any guilt in the man. And when he had spent among them no more than eight or ten days he went down to Cesarea, and the next day he sat on the judgment seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. Who being brought, the Jews who were come down from Jerusalem, stood about him, objecting many and grievous charges, which they could not prove. Paul making answer for himself: Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar, have I offended in anything. But Festus, willing to give pleasure to the Jews, answered Paul, and said: Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged concerning these things before me? Then Paul said: I stand by the judgment seat

of Caesar, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews I have done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I have judged them, or have done anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of the things whereof they accuse subsist, no man can give me over to them: I appeal to Caesar. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered: Hast thou appealed to Caesar? To Caesar thou shalt go. And after some days King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Cesarea, to salute Festus. And as they spent there many days, Festus told the king of Paul, saying: A certain man was left prisoner by Felix, about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the ancients of the Jews, came unto me, desiring judgment against him. To whom I answered: It is not the custom of the Romans to condemn any man, before the accused have his accusers present, and have opportunity of defence, to meet the charge. When, therefore, they were come hither, without any delay, on the day following, sitting on the judgment seat, I commanded the man to be brought. Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought no charge of things in regard to which I suspected evil. But they had against him certain questions of their

own religion, and of one Jesus who had died, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. I therefore being astray in a question of this kind, asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged concerning these things: But Paul, appealing to be reserved for the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept, till I might send him to Caesar. And Agrippa said to Festus: I would also hear the man myself. Tomorrow, said he, thou shalt hear him. And on the next day, when Agrippa and Bernice were come with great pomp, and had entered into the hall of audience, with the commanders and principal men of the city, by order of Festus, Paul was brought. And Festus saith: King Agrippa, and all ye men who are present together with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of Jews pressed me at Jerusalem (asking and) crying out that he should no longer live. Yet have I found that he hath committed nothing worth death. But forasmuch as he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have nothing certain to write to the Lord. For which cause I have brought him forth before thee, O King Agrippa, that examination being made, I may have what to write. For it seemeth to me un-

reasonable to send a prisoner, and not to signify the things laid to his charge. Acts, Ch. XXV.

Then Agrippa said to Paul: Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretching forth his hand, began his defence. I think myself happy, King Agrippa, being to answer for myself this day before thee, touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews. Especially as thou art cognizant of all the customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore, I beseech, hear me patiently. And my manner of life indeed from my youth, which was from the first among mine own nation in Jerusalem, all the Jews know: Who knew me from the beginning (if they will give testimony), that after the strictest sect of our religion I lived, a Pharisee. And now I stand to be judged for the hope of the promise that was made by God to our fathers; Unto which our twelve tribes, worshipping night and day, hope to come; for which hope, O King, I am accused by the Jews. Why is it thought incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? And I indeed did think that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which also I did at Jerusalem, and many of the saints

I shut up in prisons, having received authority of the chief priests and when they were put to death, I gave my vote. And oftentimes I punished them in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and raging yet more against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. In these circumstances, when I was going to Damascus, with authority and permission of the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen down on the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me in the Hebrew tongue: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad. And I said: Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord answered: I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest. But rise up and stand upon thy feet; for to this end I have appeared to thee, to make thee a minister, and a witness of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things, in which I will appear to thee. Delivering thee from the people, and the nations unto which I now send thee; to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light, and from Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and a lot among the saints, by

faith in Me. Whence King Agrippa, I was not incredulous to the heavenly vision: But first to those at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judea, and to the Gentiles I announced, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of penance. For this cause the Jews, when I was in the temple, seized me, and went about to kill me. But by the help of God I stand unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing beyond those things which the prophets and Moses said should come to pass: That Christ should suffer, and that He, the first to rise from the dead, should show light to the people and to the Gentiles. As he spake these things (in answer), Festus said with a loud voice: Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. And Paul said: I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I speak words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, to whom also I speak with confidence; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him, for neither was any of these things done in a corner. Believest thou the prophets, King Agrippa? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said to Paul: In a

little thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said: I would to God that both in a little and in much, not only thou, but also all who hear me this day, should become such as I am, except these chains. And the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they who sat with them. And when they were gone aside, they spake among themselves, saying: This man hath done nothing worthy of death, or of bonds. And Agrippa said to Festus: This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Caesar. Acts, Ch. XXVI.

Not by his miracles, by which he converted the world, not by his prophecies by which he overcame the hearts of men, by the reception of the truth, not by the predictions which he uttered, which were afterwards gloriously fulfilled; not by the words of the poet King; not by the riches of a mind of a prophet; not by the wealth of mind of Apostle or prophet or the divine inspiration which illumines the word of God; not by these or any of these did Christ present to the children of men more irrevocable evidence of his divinity, as that which he afforded to St. Paul for his conversion and our eternal monument by the light-giving testi-

mony of his advent on the road to Damascus. If this were not evidence, away with all that is evidence of Christ's divinity.

In every age, in every doubt that human incredulity or scepticism has moved against the faith in Christ's divinity; when incredulity would seem to have stolen our holy belief, the faithful have instinctively turned to the manifestation seen in the heavens on this day when Christ appeared to St. Paul, to find corroboration of their belief in the divinity of Christ, and all men have turned away saying this truly was the Son of God—this manifestly is more than enough to silence incredulity and to make all men acknowledge the power and omniscience of God who has revealed to all the unconquerable proof, more than enough to satisfy Paul and more than enough to declare to the ages of men that He Who had wrought miracles, fulfilled prophecies, rose again from the dead by the spirit of holiness, and the conqueror of death who had overcome death and lived to die no more. Oh! grave where is thy victory, Oh! death where is thy sting? The sting of death is destruction to the body, but life from the grave is life forevermore.

Enter the tomb of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome; its vastness does not amaze you. But

your mind expanded by the genius of the spot has grown colossal. Of temples old or altars new this is most majestic; this is the most majestic tomb of temples old or altars new, vivid temple of the living God and true. It was the genius of Angelo that by his loftiest conception threw the Pantheon, where was worshipped all the pagan gods, threw it aloft beyond 400 feet in mid-air. This is the worthiest conception that the genius of man could devise to perpetuate for all time the names and fame of the two Apostles Peter and Paul. As you enter you salute the one by kissing his foot; the other farther in and less visible is interred in the crypt of St. Paul. Faithful souls, Peter and Paul, the pillars of the majestic temple which they outwardly guard and sustain: the ideal reproduced in the noblest fabric ever erected by the genius of man to the holiness of the living God. If we could imagine that temple animated by the spirit of God, we could have an idea, and a worthy one of the glory, power, majesty, embellishment all aisled in one living aisle undefiled. The silver trumpets reverberating through the vast dome lift your thoughts on high, till you would be transported before the magic sound that fills it again and again with the sweetest mel-

ody ever sent forth from angelic beings short of divine.

Poet and orator and musician have vied with each other in seeking to give utterance to these divine symphonies of human culture and inspiring sounds that would not misbecome the lips of the heavenly beings—who may well be imagined to cast their crowns before the Lamb slain from the beginning to whom they render their profoundest adoration to the loving God enthroned on high before the divine spirits.

The immense pilasters, each one hundred and twenty-five feet in circumference, serve to support the mighty dome floating in mid-air, and challenging the wonder, the adoration, and despair of mankind. The temple of Solomon, even in its renovated splendor, is but a sorry figure of this ark undefiled, the only worthy receptacle of the decapitated head of Paul and the strangled corpse of St. Peter, to whom might be added the figure prostrate of St. Stephen.

"Who then shall separate us from the Charity of Christ? Tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword? (As it is written: For Thy sake we are put to death all the day: we

are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) But in all these things we overcome, because of Him Who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come (nor might), nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." Rom. VIII; 35-39.

Hymn

It is no earthly summer's ray
That sheds this golden brightness round,
Crowning with heavenly light the day
The Princes of the Church were crowned.

The blessed Seer to whom was given
The hearts of men to teach and school
And he who keeps the key of heaven
For those on earth that own his rule.

Fathers of mighty Rome, whose word
Shall pass the doom of life or death
By humble cross or bleeding sword
Well have they won their laurel wreath.

O happy Rome, made holy now
By these two Martyrs' glorious blood
Earth's best and fairest cities bow,
By thy superior claims subdued.

For thou alone art worth them all,
City of Martyrs! Thou alone
Canst cheer our pilgrim hearts, and call
The Saviour's sheep to Peter's throne.

All honor, power and praise be given
To Him Who reigns in bliss on high,
For endless, endless years in Heaven
One only God in Trinity, Amen.

Lead us, great teacher Paul, in wisdom's ways,
And lift our hearts with thine to Heaven's high throne;
Till Faith beholds the clear meridian blaze,
And, sun-like, in the soul reigns Charity alone.

Praise, blessing, majesty, through endless days,
Be to the Trinity Eternal given;
Who in pure Unity profoundly sways
Eternally all things alike in earth and heaven.
Amen.

Lessons From St. Peter

PART I

Of all the incidents connected with the Passion of Christ, outside of those which reach our Blessed Lord Himself, there is scarcely one so touching in character and so suitable to excite within us sentiments of gratitude as the circumstance which transpired on the first night of the Passion of Christ, when Peter, crossing the yard of the High Priest, was heard to say to a maid servant that he knew not the man and Jesus' eye looking upon Peter, reproachfully, but yet kindly, and without a word but with a suggestion that Peter instinctively felt Jesus meant for himself, thus reminding him of the words he had uttered in the course of the day that though all should betray Him he would never betray Him. Peter, overcome by his feelings, went out into the darkness of night and wept bitterly. While Judas, who must have heard the same word from Jesus, instead of standing faithfully by his Master, hastened whither he knew not, and, overcome by remorse, searched for a place where he could destroy his own life, and allowed himself to

fall from an overhanging tree upon a split rock severing his body from which the bowels flowed out. Thus by despair he lost that which by courage and virtue and the inspiration of divine grace he might have regained. But Peter, by tears which furrowed his face all the days of his life, became the victim of his own remorseful bitter sorrow.

Peter and the rest of the apostles soon after the resurrection of Christ hastened to their respective destinies: John to Ephesus, Thomas to India, Peter after a time sought out Antioch as the abode in which he was to pass the years that would yet intervene before he took up his residence in the Eternal City. It is believed that this was through the wish of Christ, Who desired that he become His representative in the capital of Christendom and from there rule as His vicar and supreme representative.

Some years passed on; the Christians had gathered in Rome; Peter and Paul had hastened thither; the reign of Nero with all its bloodshed was in the fiercest fury. There was nothing in the instructions of Christ to hinder the apostles from escaping from place to place according to Christ's own words "When they seek you in one place, seek ye safety in another." For it was no part of the

economy of Christ Jesus that the apostles should be unnecessarily murdered if it were possible for them to reconcile their duties as apostles either with bloodshed on the cross or burning in the funeral pyre. The bloody persecution was at its height. Nero had set fire to the great city of Rome, wrongfully accusing the Christians of the guilt thereof and causing their bodies to be used as torches with which to illumine the old dark city and light it up with all its blood-stained horrors and horrid cruelties.

Peter seeing this and realizing his duty in the premises sought his safety in flight outside of the Eternal City, and one mile beyond the Flaminian Gate, as he passed under the archway, whom did he see coming towards him but Jesus Christ. And Jesus looked upon Peter and Peter on Jesus, and Peter said to Him: "Domine, quo vadis?"—"Lord, where goest thou?" Christ heard the words and wishing to intimate to Peter His purpose in re-entering Rome and Peter's duty of staying in Rome, at once answered: "Peter, I go to Rome again to be crucified." Peter thus admonished by the divine Word, turned on his heel, fully bent to return to Rome to die a martyr's death. The persecution lasted for a time longer. Peter

and Paul were cast into prison—the one to be decapitated, from which decapitation sprang three unfailing founts yet to be seen in the Eternal City near the Salvian waters; and Peter in humility for his Lord and Master requested that if he was to be crucified he wanted to die with his head downward because he felt unworthy to die with his head upward as the Lord Jesus had done. Peter remained many years in Antioch before finally deciding on where he should fix the abode of his perpetual See. It is believed that it was by the inspiration of Christ that he was moved to take up his residence for a time in Antioch and afterward in Rome. However this may be, he betook himself to the Eternal City where he abode for over twenty-five years and where his long residence verified the prediction uttered then and since at every Papal consecration, "The years of Peter thou shalt not see;" words which have been verified from then until the present time. This lasted until the termination of the reign of Pius IX, who exercised the Papacy for thirty-three years before going to his long rest. During a long series of 260 Pontiffs, there was but one exception and that in our own days. And now what are we to say concerning the preroga-

tives of these great Pontiffs and their claims to the virtues which illustrated and abilities which distinguished them? Pius IX with his thirty-three years; Leo with his long thirty-two years; Pius X with his smaller trial; and Benedict and the present incumbent, and those who are yet to come may be for shorter terms, but of clarified and honorable fame; all to be ranked among the greatest Pontiffs of the long list that illumine the diptychs of Holy Church. Let heretics feign anything like the glorious list from Peter to the present Vicar of Christ. The fast spread of the faith everywhere throughout the world, especially in Rome itself, and by the assiduous efforts of the apostles, with the cruel blow that befell paganism when Simon Magus, in his reckless wildness, having sought to purchase, by money and gifts, it and its divine graces of the Apostle, attempted to fly into the air and collapsed, falling upon the rock beneath him, when he was the victim of his absurd fanaticism. His discomfiture was too much for Nero who was then in the sixty-fourth year of the Christian era and who was exasperated by the pagan humiliation. Nero at the time had already murdered, or was about to murder, his own mother out of sheer disappointment and bitterness

from a real or fancied contempt of his parent, who was considerable of a politician and aspired to the rulership of her son's government. All this inflamed Nero and he resolved on a desperate revenge. He undertook to destroy the city and to enjoy the horrid pleasure that its conflagration afforded him. He made combustible the Christian martyrs by covering their bodies with igneous tar, illuminating thereby with deadly flames the whole of the city. Thus supplied with lamps extemporized of the burning bodies of the wretched Christians, he walked about enjoying the horrid spectacle with musicians and singers to while away the time and, in a degree, to lessen in his ears the awful groans of the Soldiers of Christ as they deserved to be immortalized with all their agony and suffering.

Forty-three prisoners had been confined in the Mamertine prison with Peter and Paul and others—Soldiers of Jesus Christ—until their time would come. This was, alas, too soon. Peter, as I have said, sought his safety in flight and was rejoined by Paul. For it was not contrary to the lessons of Christ which they had received to go from city to plain, again and again, in search of safety by flight and concealment. Thus Paul was secured on the prop-

erty owned by the family of Gregory the Great. It was while seeking his ambush outside the gates of Rome, a mile or thereabout, that occurred the incident of the meeting of Christ and Peter which I have recorded in the foregoing part of this discourse. At night and a mile outside of the imperial city, while Peter sought to disguise himself, did Christ appear to him and replied to Peter's question, "Domine, quo vadis?" with the words: "Romam iterum crucificiendum!"

He and Paul and forty-seven others were confined in the Mamertine prison. Paul being brought before Nero confessed that he received merited consolation. At this time he rejoiced to be called the Soldier of Jesus Christ. As a Roman citizen he could not be crucified. He was beheaded at the Salvian waters.

Paul was transferred to another church where he reposed until transferred, after years, to another tomb on the property of St. Gregory the Great.

St. Peter was crucified with his head downward, deeming himself unworthy to die in the attitude of his Lord and Master according to the prediction of Christ: "When thou wast young, thou walketh where thou wilt; but

when thou shalt be old, thou walkest where thou wouldst not."

St. Paul and St. Peter were executed by Nero in the year 64. St. Peter was sacrificed on the very spot where stood the house of Nero. He is buried at one side of that sepulchre designated the Confession of St. Peter. St. Paul, at first interred on the Appian Way, was subsequently transferred to the niche corresponding to Peter's vault where he still remains, although but one-half of his body was there placed, the other half remained for many years, if not centuries, in the place of his martyrdom. Thus these glorious saints found a resting place under the most majestic dome that the genius of man ever designed—the sublimest canopy that ever separated the bodies of saints from the firmament above the earth, and separated them from the orbs and stars of heaven. Truly, the throbbings of the mighty ocean could not give a sublimer music to these orbs as they bowed their worship to these heavenly beings for whom it might seem that heaven and the spheres were made in adoration. They were the glories that lit up the lamps of heaven.

Nero and his persecutors have perished and are forever forgotten of men, amidst the exe-

cration of all men; but the martyrs—the forty-seven who perished in the Mamertine prison, companions of Peter and Paul enjoy imperishable glory in heaven.

From that immortal crypt, as imperishable as Rome itself, has gone forth an influence and sanctifying power which has renovated the world and made sacred the souls of men and martyrs. It has been the cradle of every inspiration, of lofty heroism, of self-sacrifice, of the noblest deeds and thoughts of men: the prayer of the saint, the rhapsody of the poet, the pathos of the orator, the well-pondered and taught lessons of the philosopher, the gifted artist pregnant with celestial fire, the sagacity of the statesman and the depth of the learning of the theologian—all, all may be traced to the blood shed copiously for Christ and His salvation.

Three hundred and sixty Popes have ensanguined that See of Peter. Forty and more of them have poured out their blood like water and done acts of virtue, imperishable in their nature, and which must forever embalm them in all the memories of men. Churches built, convents erected and peopled with saints, hospitals organized, of which no record has been at all fully preserved; has never been, and

never can be, classed or compared or numbered with the missions started and sustained under the most adverse circumstances and yet overcoming all such adversities which Satan and the world has plotted against them "that he might sift them as wheat"—that there might not remain a vestige of the good purchased by bloodshed and self-sacrifice, inexhaustible works and deeds of charity and benevolence and heroism.

To Rome, the city of Peter, the whole world has looked for and obtained comfort and consolation from the day when Peter and Paul laid down their lives for sake of Christ. Not more inspiring in every age has been the cross that is raised aloft on that dome than the inspiration which every martyr and saint has received, in trial and tribulation, from the beacon light that is flashed from its 400 feet of altitude to guide all men to a port of safety and a haven of rest, evincing its real character as the asylum of mankind, driven by despair on every strand, and by every manner of adversity and pain and exile.

There the saints and doctors from Chrysostom down have found a home and an adviser in the Vicar of Christ. Political vicissitudes have dealt fiercely with the victims of persecu-

tion and the stern trials of malice and obloquy. Tyrconnel, the patriot of Ireland, there found refuge and long was guarded against Protestant England and the rancorous bitterness of the factions that rent and almost ruined his own beloved land.

And in the last of O'Connel's years, when famine raged and the graves of Irishmen ran blood, while on his way to the city of Peter, to the tomb of Peter, the great liberator laid down the burden of his life in the cradle of churches. To Rome he destined his heart, among the martyrs around St. Peter and St. Paul, his soul he commended to God, while his body he would have interred in the land to which he had devoted his life.

This glorious heritage which all the faithful have inherited from St. Peter down—shelter under the overwhelming dome of St. Peter's—has become the common property of Christendom. Who could hesitate to enter into this majestic mausoleum of the dead of every age, of every clime, of true faith? This glorious temple, veriest temple of the old or new, has been the inspiration of all religion and the undying glory of all the Christian world. It would need the genius of Byron to inspire us with the inspiration of Rome, the home of

the Popes, the world's refuge, the sepulchre of Sts. Peter and Paul and all the other saints and martyrs which fill its aisles and vivify the animated marble of its glowing magnificence —the living marble giving life and strength and hope and undying immortality to these remnants of heaven's lost spirits loitering still on earth and giving a new life to all these material objects. And fortunately the genius of Byron has found suitable matter for his glorious imagination. See the passages from "Childe Harold," in his inimitable verses: "Enter, its vastness does not overwhelm thee, for, expanded by the genius of the spot, thy mind has grown colossal and almost bewildered."

The special virtue and main characteristic that shine in the character of St. Peter are suggested to us by the circumstances which brought to observation his conduct amidst Christ and the company of the other apostles. There were so many occasions and times that brought his character into relief and rendered impossible to avoid seeing it that we need not stop to enumerate or classify them. They all showed the firmness and stability of his resolution, his unshaken purpose of life and stubborn virtue as that of a serious mould or a zealous apostle.

We need not invoke the scene which took place in Caesarea Philippi and the Apostle's firm profession of faith on that and similar occasions. "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God; Thou art the Messiah sent into the world." And then with the most gracious reference to Peter's firmness and unshaken loyalty: "Blessed art thou, Peter, because not flesh and blood hath revealed to thee but My Father Who is in heaven. Thou shalt be the rock foundation of My Church against which the powers of darkness and hell shall not prevail. They may seek to chaff you even as wheat is ground to powder in the mill; hell may seek to destroy you by its machinations. Yet the enemies who seek to destroy you shall never prevail: for I have prayed for thee and thy companions and my prayers shall not fail, and thou at once converted confirm thy brethren. In all this there was the clearest and most manifest reference to the firmness, constancy and abiding faith and stubborn obstinancy of Peter, firm as the column with buried base discovered by Byron: "Tully was not more eloquent than thou, nameless column with the buried base."

Nothing can be more eloquent than the superb figure of St. Peter in gold stationed at

the altar within a few feet, almost within reach of the confessional where both of the Apostles repose. Peter with the Keys of the Kingdom in his left hand, with an aureole of glory encircling his noble brow, with his right hand raised in benediction to all who invoke him; the meekness, the mildness, the majesty of his figure; the decision of his face expanded upon all whom he looks on, as one after another the faithful advance to imprint a kiss upon his toes or any part they can reach. So continuous and so increasing has this act of devotion been that it has almost worn out the foot of the golden figure. Juvenal, the brilliant satirist of Roman literature, declares that there is a golden figure in Rome—referring to this of Peter—that the people of high degree and low, and of every condition and walk of life, have so obliterated that the gold is worn so as to be almost a thin layer.

The cynical satirist must have been satisfied of the truth when he made this declaration, which has come down the ages, and forms the signal mark which illumines the glorious tomb which it covers.

It was, indeed, a sad occurrence that led Peter, after his brilliant proclamation of the divinity of Christ, after his declaration that

though all might betray Him, yet not he, of his boast that he would follow Jesus unto death and, at the silly sound of a maid-servant's voice, would deny—and that with horrid blasphemy—that he knew not his Master. No wonder that, overcome by his grief, he walked out into the darkest pitch of the night and would fain hide himself in impenetrable solitude.

Yet his wisdom and intense regret went before him and prepared his reconciliation by prayer and penance and withering sorrow—the road that repentance ever treads. All this with divine grace was given beyond measure. Wisdom lead him up the rugged path of repentance and Calvary, purity and bitter mortification. Having gone out into solitude he returned to visit his Master once more and to be reconciled to Him in bonds that knew no further dissolution.

Judas abandoned his Lord, sought Him no more; in vain sought to return the blood-money which he had grasped and would willingly return to the priests if they would but accept it. But to no purpose. The fatal die had been cast, and having assumed the mark of perdition, wore it even now. The only way by which he would rid himself of the guilt was self-destruction; falling or throwing himself between

the branches of a tree, or the narrow edge of a sharp rock, he was split in two and his bowels dropped out.

Sad indeed was Peter's fall but he had the spirit of repentance, the word of God in his heart, and the dictates of conscience to rise therefrom and to seek forgiveness forever after. "How many times shall we forgive our brothers: shall it be one in seven times?" "Amen, I say to you if your brother sin against thee, and be reconciled, not seven times but seventy times seven times." Lapse is no necessary sign of failure of virtue, but falling and rising again and again is the necessary sign of virtue that finally overcomes all obstacles and rules triumphant. Lapse and rise run on correlative lines. Pascal himself remarks: "If vice conquers virtue, it will in the long run be found that virtue will overcome vice." The mistake that lowers us will redound to the virtue that exalts us. There is grace enough to elicit faith; there is grace enough to humble our faith.

Wisdom, repentance, perseverance, were the distinct characteristics of Peter. Sorrow for the past, amendment for the future. These were the constituent elements which if they allowed him to fall yet enabled him to rise again

and atone for his fault. He wore furrows in his noble face sufficient to mark the penitential life that he forever carried on; and the features were effaced by sufferings which were never forgotten in the lessons of sorrow that he had always before him by day and night.

Such were the two glorious saints of the Most High God—of the masters of Christendom—till their sins were washed away in tears of repentance, and the pangs of torture and grief, and they were made clean in the blood of the Lamb and their names inscribed on the diptychs of the church altars. Such must ever be the lot of all who die to be decorated with the aureole of the martyr's crown.

Love, loyalty, stability and strength of character were the characteristic virtues of St. Peter and, in a high degree, of St. Paul the doctor of the Gentiles. Nor is there reason why we should discriminate between the two. What was wanting in the one was more than supplied by the other; what was small in either became large by zeal. The tears of Peter more than atoned for the heroism of Paul. The combination of the two more than perfected the happy pair of Christ-made men which could no longer be rent in twain, and failed to make one greater than the other. Willingly we could

pursue this subject more fully and seek still more the loyalty and love and stability of St. Peter and the overflowing zeal of Paul to confirm in all their own virtues and those that had been entrusted and cherished from the command of Christ: "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep. Cherish the pasture which I have placed under your guidance and unfailing care and unceasing vigilance." And thus did Peter down all the ages to the present hour.

Who could have loved Jesus with greater zeal and constancy, in spite of his denial, his dread of the maid-servant and consequent fear of the Jews? He fell, indeed; but rose again and with true manliness sought to atone for his weakness and pusilanimity. Who could have made ampler satisfaction? Or, next to not falling again, who could be happier in his rising? It was easy to lapse, which is often the case of the noblest soul, but it is not so easy to rise again. But the magnanimity that prompted and sustained him against subsequent lapses showed the truly sterling character of the faithful servant of Christ. To fall was mean, but to rise again by masterly contrition was the perfection of manhood strengthened by grace. Show me the creature that never sins and I will show you the poltroon or

the faltering weakling who lacks the quality of true and sincere repentance.

"Confirm thy brethren," was the mandate issued to Peter by Christ. How great must have been the confidence which the Lord reposed in him when, amidst all His sorrow and prostrateness of spirit, He still relied upon him for this signal duty, this unfailing duty of love? How easily did Christ feel that He could find this filial and unshaken trust which He knew He would find in Peter?

"I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not. When thou turnest from the fall that has already been yours, confirm thy brethren." Yet it is the fallen but now risen Peter that Christ seeks as the rod of strength with which to strengthen the other brethren.

The tender solicitude which existed between Christ and St. Peter and the mutual love which it inspired is conspicuously seen in His prayer for him: "I have prayed for thee, and thou once converted, confirm thy brethren. Satan hath desired to have thee that he might sift thee as wheat, that he might again and again direct against you his engines of destruction and, destroying you, destroy thy fellow apostles with thee: but fear not, for I have prayed for thee and my prayer has been heard

by the eternal Father. For I am with you all days till time ceases and the church withers if it could. Remember what I have told you of old: the devil will seek to extirpate the church but the gates and powers of hell shall never prevail against My Church." That he will never be in the least shaken; "I have prayed" and that prayer anointed with the grace and wonderful efficacy of the Holy Ghost Who will shortly enter into and take up an eternal alliance with you. Mark, if you may, the tender love and undying affectionateness of Christ for Peter and all the apostles who sailed in the craft with Him, before and forever since they went down to the sea, as emblematic of the sailing of Christ and His gallant crew. No language which Christ spoke, nor no language in which He could express His eager solicitude, could declare more touchingly or sensibly His love for Peter and for all those whom He had entrusted to his custody.

With what measure of words shall we dilate upon the love of Christ for Peter and the love of Peter for Christ in the memorable scene when Christ came upon all the company on the banks of the Sea of Tiberias? Having given the order to cast their net in at the other side the net almost collapsed with the weight of

fishes that were drawn out. The Apostles were indeed amazed. A fire being made and the coals reddened some fishes were placed on them. Soon they were broiled. This with a few loaves were ample to repletion.

Then Jesus looking upon all, but particularly upon Peter, addressed him, and as the prefatory and condition to the marvelous power which He was about to confer upon him: "Peter, lovest thou Me more than these?" And he answered: "Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee." Again and again Christ repeated the same interrogation. "Lovest thou Me more than these?" Again and again Christ made the same injunction. Thus terminated the solemn feast. Then Peter was made the shepherd and pastor and teacher and guide of the sheep and of the lambs, both pastors and people. Christ shortly afterward withdrew and left them to their thoughts, and their instructions or mandates, to dwell upon the consolation which they had felt and the lessons and ordinances of the new religion which Christ had established in the world and in the souls of men.

Hail holy Peter! Hail holy Paul! Love, constancy and sorrow, repentance sweet. Forever enshrined be the garland of thy divine

twined hands. Beheaded Paul headless shows, but replete with glory forevermore.

Love, constancy, sorrow, repentance are the constituent elements of the virtue and the holiness that make the saint or recover the sinner. Saint and sinner are new moulded in the fire and force of the purifying process by which all are renewed and rededicated to God and His work, that precedes the new baptism of love, firmness, contrition, repentance. True change of heart, purified will, enlightened by grace, unscathed by guilt, made acceptable to the God of holiness in Whom there is neither stain nor the defilement of sin; but purified as the prophet was with the coal of fire. Thus made acceptable to the God of charity, faith, repentance—charity that knows no evil, that thinketh no harm, that knoweth all things and perfects all things in Christ and for Christ. This is religion before God and man, angel and saint.

Lessons From St. Peter

PART II

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the elect sojourners dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, grace and peace be multiplied to you. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to His great mercy, hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading, preserved in heaven for you. Who are guarded by the power of God by faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. In which ye will greatly rejoice, though now for a short time ye must be afflicted by various trials. That the trial of your faith much more precious than gold (which is tried by fire) may be found unto praise, and glory, and honor in the revelation of Jesus Christ; Whom not having seen, ye love: in Whom also ye believe, though ye see

Him not: yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of souls. Of which salvation the prophets, who prophesied of the grace which was to be in you, have inquired and searched diligently: Searching into what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ might signify in them: foretelling the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow: To whom it was revealed, that not for themselves, but for you they ministered those things, which are now announced to you, by those who have preached the gospel to you, the Holy Spirit being sent down from heaven, on whom the angels desire to look. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, hope perfectly for the grace which is offered to you, at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient children not fashioning themselves to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He Who hath called you is holy, be ye also holy in all your conduct: Because it is written: Ye shall be holy, for I am holy. And if ye call Him Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to the work of each one, walk in fear in the time of your sojourning: Knowing that not with corruptible things, gold or silver, ye were redeemed from your vain manner of life

handed down from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb, spotless and undefiled: Who indeed was foreknown, before the foundation of the world, but manifested in the last times for you, who through Him do believe in God, Who raised him from the dead, and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. Having purified your souls in the obedience of charity, by the love of the brotherhood, with a sincere heart, love one another earnestly: Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, who liveth and remaineth forever: For all flesh is as grass: and all its glory as the flower of the grass: the grass is withered, and its flower is fallen away. But the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word, which hath been preached to you. I S. Peter, Ch. I.

Therefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisy, and envy, and all slanders. As new-born babes, desire rational guileless milk, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation: If yet ye have tasted, that the Lord is sweet, to Whom approaching as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen of God, and honored: Ye also as living stones are built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood,

to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Wherefore the Scripture containeth: Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, chosen precious and whoever believeth in Him shall not be confounded. To you therefore who believe will be the honor: but to those who believe not, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is made the head of the corner: And a stumbling stone, and a rock of scandal, to those who stumble at the word, and do not believe, whereunto they are also set. But ye are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people: that ye may declare the virtues of Him, who hath called you from darkness to His admirable light. Who in time past were not a people, but now are the people of God: Who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from carnal lusts, which war against the soul, having your conduct good among the Gentiles; that wherein they slander you as evil-doers, considering you by your good works, they may glorify God in the day of visitation. Be ye therefore subject to every human creature for God's sake: whether to the king, as excelling, or to governors, as sent by him for the punishment of

evil-doers and for the praise, of those who do well: For so is the will of God, that doing well ye may put to silence the ignorance of the foolish men. As free, and not having liberty as a cloak for maliciousness, but as servants of God. Honor all: love the brotherhood: fear God: honor the king. Domestics, be subject in all fear to masters; not only to the good and gentle, but even to the froward. For this is praiseworthy, if for conscience towards God a man endure afflictions, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye are punished for faults, ye bear it? But if doing well ye suffer patiently, this is acceptable before God. For to this ye are called: Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving to you an example, that ye shall follow in the steps of Him Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth: Who when He was reviled, reviled not: when He suffered, threatened not, but delivered Himself up to him who judged him unjustly: Who himself bare our sins, in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins should live to justice: by Whose stripes ye are healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now converted to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. (I S. Peter; Ch. II.)

In like manner also let wives be subject to their husbands, that even if any do not believe the word, they may be gained without the word by the conduct of the wives, considering your chaste conduct is fear: Whose adorning let it not be that which is outward, the plaiting of the hair, or the wearing of gold, or the putting on of garments; but the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruption of a quiet and meek spirit, which is of great price in the sight of God. For after this manner formerly even the holy women, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands. As Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye are, as long as ye do well, and fear no trouble. Ye husbands, in like manner dwell with them, according to knowledge, giving honor as to the weaker female vessel, as being also heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers be not hindered. Finally be ye all of one mind, sympathizing, loving the brotherhood, merciful (modest), humble: Not rendering evil for evil, nor insult for insult; but on the contrary, blessing, for to this ye are called, that ye may inherit a blessing. For let him who will love life, and see good days, refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him turn

away from evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it: For the eyes of the Lord are on the just, and His ears are open to their prayers; but the countenance of the Lord is on those who do evil. And who is there, who can hurt you, if ye be zealous for good? But if also ye suffer something for justice, blessed are ye. And fear not their terror, and be not troubled. But sanctify Christ the Lord in your hearts, and be always ready to satisfy every one who asketh of you a reason of the hope which is in you; but with meekness and fear, having a good conscience, that wherein they slander you as evil-doers, they who falsely arraign your good conduct in Christ may be confounded. For it is better (if the will of God so ordain) that ye suffer for well doing, than for doing ill Because Christ also died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that being dead in the flesh, but quickened in spirit, He might present us to God. Wherein also He went and preached to those spirits in prison: Who had been sometimes incredulous, when they looked forward to the long suffering of God in the days of Noe, when the ark was abuilding: in which few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. As baptism, the anti-type, now saveth you also; not the putting

away of the filth of the flesh, but the appeal of a good conscience to God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Who is on the right hand of God (swallowing up death, that we might be made heirs of eternal life) : He being gone into heaven, having subjected to Himself angels, and authorities, and powers. (I S. Peter: Ch. III.)

Hymn

It is no earthly summer's ray
That sheds this golden brightness round,
Crowning with heavenly light the day
The Princes of the Church were crowned.

The blessed Seer to whom was given
The hearts of men to teach and school
And he who keeps the key of heaven
For those on earth that own his rule.

Fathers of mighty Rome, whose word
Shall pass the doom of life or death
By humble cross or bleeding sword
Well have they won their laurel wreath.

O, happy Rome, made holy now
By these two martyrs' glorious blood;
Earth's best and fairest cities bow,
By thy superior claims subdued.

For thou alone art worth them all,
City of Martyrs! Thou alone
Canst cheer our pilgrim hearts and call
The Saviour's sheep to Peter's throne.

All honor, power and praise be given
To Him Who reigns in bliss on high,
For endless, endless years in Heaven,
One only God in Trinity, Amen.

Peter, blessed shepherd hearken to our cry,
And with a word unloose our guilty chain,
Thou! who hast power to ope the gates on high
To men below, and power to shut them fast again.

Praise, blessing, majesty, through endless days,
Be to the Trinity Eternal given:
Who in Pure Unity profoundly sways
Eternally all things alike in earth and heaven.

On St. John.

PART I

"Of those born of woman there has not been a greater than John the Baptist. Yet he who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

We would search all history, profane and ecclesiastical, for a nobler panegyric than that which the Lord pronounced in these words; we have perused the discourse on Trajan pronounced by the great Roman orator; we have studied the undying words spoken by other great orators, and by them we have been reminded of the eloquence of some of these panegyrics spoken in ancient and modern times; but nowhere can we find such words as those of Christ. "But what went you out to see? A reed shaken by the wind? But what went you out to see? One clothed in soft garments," etc. In these words we behold the fortitude, the mortification, the self-denial. Locusts and wild honey were the food which nourished St. John. Greater than whom hath not been born of woman. "Go and relate to John what you have seen: the blind see, the lame walk,

the lepers are cleansed, the dead arise, and blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in Me." The two sermons—the one on St. John, the greatest born of woman; the second contains the proofs of Christ's divinity. Christ was the King of martyrs. Not the first: for from the blood of Cain to the blood of Zachariah shed between the temple and the altar, the prophets had been persecuted. Daniel was cast into the lions' den. The royal prophet Isaiah had been sawed in two by his son-in-law. The Maccabees record the slaughter of the glorious man, the martyr who died rather than eat swine's flesh; the seven sons, martyred before their mother's eyes, and left her with a bleeding heart.

The recent massacre of the three priests in Tennessee, California, North Dakota, who were but victims in the discharge of their official duty, forces us to refer to these most atrocious of crimes.

St. John the Baptist during his brief course had denounced the action of Herod in living in incest with his brother's wife; saying, that it was not lawful. One Herodias was the concubine; her daughter was a famous court dancer who was wont to dance to please Herod. He was captivated by her; so that he pledged

himself to give her whatever she desired even though it was one half his kingdom. Yet he repented of his folly and because of his courtiers and the great magnates that stood around he did not dare to carry into execution the sundering of his kingdom for the sake of his infatuation. Her mother prompted her daughter to demand the head of John by which she would be enabled to gratify the mother and herself because of John having denounced Herod, the old sinner, and the younger, her daughter. This they thought would be to wreak vengeance on John. Hence she instructed her daughter to desire of Herod the head of John in a dish, by which she could glut her vengeance in gazing upon the eyeless head of the holy martyr, who had but discharged his duty by denouncing both Herod and Herodias of the crime of incest. This is the first instance by which a saint fell a victim to the accursed custom of dancing, the fruitful source of so many crimes and a base gratification then and since.

The salient Christlike virtues of John were his spirit of mortification, his fortitude and valor, his self-sacrifice leading him even to his premature death, and all the other virtues embodied in these three and exemplified in his

life and character. Before proceeding to consider these lofty virtues in the saint, we had better probably dwell somewhat more upon the life and history and death of the Baptist, for it may well be that in this latter survey of his deeds we will find more than enough to supply more matter for even a very different discourse.

From the time when Herod was captivated by the terpsichorean antics of the daughter of Herodias, the latter was moved to hatred and bitter rancor against John, and sought whatever opportunity she could seize to lead Herod in the way of gratifying her animosity and indulging the spleen of her wanton daughter who was one with her mother in the fixed purpose of revenge. Hence hatred of John and love of mother and daughter easily found lodgment in their wicked hearts which was intensified by the impure instincts and wanton love of Herodias: thus she would exhibit her influence over the court; thus she would enslave Herod to her fell and nefarious designs. What cared she for John if she could ensnare Herod in her inveiglements and come off as another Cleopatra and Mark Antony in her arms as the victim of her amours to whom Julius Caesar was the conqueror of the east.

Opportunity soon presented itself; she was not slow to embrace it and her paramour.

John was yet in prison, not knowing what was yet to come: a secure victim readily at hand as the object of Herodias' bitterness, being punished for the offense he had given to her as her husband's brother's wife, that it was not lawful to take as his own his brother's wife: that such a crime involved them both in the atrocious crime of incest forbidden by pagan and Judaical law, at which even the pagan shuddered, and the Jews held in damning abhorrence.

The disciples of John hearing of the works of Jesus and narrating them to John were deputed to go to Jesus and ask of Him: "Who art Thou: art Thou He Who is to come or look we for another?" Jesus replied, referring to the miracles of John shortly before that when John undertook to baptize those who had gone out to him in the desert places around Jerusalem. "What went you out to see? Was it a reed to be shaken by the wind? Was it to see those clothed in purple and fine linen? Behold, those thus clothed are in the houses of Kings. But what went you outside to see? Was it a prophet? Yea, I say to you and more than a prophet, for of men born of

woman there hath not arisen a man greater than John the Baptist. But He who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

"Go, and relate again to John the things which you have seen. The blind see; the deaf hear; the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed; the poor have the Gospel preached to them, the dead are raised up and blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in Me" that is, who shall not allow the works that I do to be an hindrance to his faith in Me.

What greater miracle than that of restoring sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, soundness to the maimed; speech to the dumb, and all the other works which Jesus declared has been wrought by Him to give testimony that He is the Eternal Son sent into the world to vouchsafe salvation to the soul, health to the body. So many types of the soul's salvation prefigured by the miracles performed on them by the Messiah and God manifested in the flesh. The seal of omnipotence was stamped upon all these miracles for the restoration to health of the body and the restoration to the soul of divine grace.

The long wished for opportunity which Herodias sought soon arrived. Now she

will avenge herself for John's denunciation of her sin and that of Herod in living together in incest. She could not spare her feelings against John for such gratification was denied her. For she aspired to be the paramour and the victor of the two Jews—the Herods; she still a pagan. This gave her great prominence with the corrupt society of the period, and raised her to a dignity all but regal, while it also rendered conspicuous her dancing daughter.

Yet on being reminded of his promise to give her one half of his kingdom, he balked to execute the rash promise because of the persons who filled his court; for he could not be wholly indifferent to the esteem of those who stood around and with whom he was desirous to uphold the credit and integrity of his word.

Hence he urges Herodias to make known what reward would be acceptable to the dancer. Herodias at once instigated her to demand the head of John on a platter which should be presented to her. The king was stark mad for he esteemed John both for himself and the wondrous works which he had done. So true was this that he would have willingly cancelled the penalty and allowed John to go free except that he would have been

contemned of men; and he would have inflicted some other punishment upon the greatest man of his kingdom, who might have risen to great power and even affluence, and brought distinction upon his government, and might have indeed been the forerunner of the Messiah. For when he heard of the works of Jesus he declared that he was John the Baptist who had come back to life that he might perform even mightier deeds than he had when all Jerusalem went out to receive him, and be baptized at his hands. That Herod regarded him as some great personage. For Herod, by the tinge of his Judaical education, and his expectancy of seeing the Messiah, must at that time have been on the lookout for the expected Messiah.

It was not because John did not know that Jesus was the Messiah that he sent men to ask Him who He was. John knew that he was the first cousin of the Lord, and that from the first moment when he exulted in his mother's womb he had been sent into the world to prepare the way of the Lord. But he wished Jesus to make open and explicit declaration. At once Jesus answers the query: "Go, and tell John what you have already seen, and do now again see. The blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and blessed is he

who will not find a rock of scandal or any impediment by which he may be hindered from entering the Kingdom of heaven." Thus Jesus makes answer to the questions put to Christ. He tells them that by his miracles on the souls and bodies and understanding of men that it is obvious that they need not look for another; for the looked-for is already come and is already among them. Or as John puts it there had stood One already on the ground, the latchet of whose shoe he was not worthy to loose. But He was to be baptized by John; for so it behooveth to fulfill all justice. Hence when Jesus ascended from the Jordan, already washed by John, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost was visibly seen ascending and descending upon, and the voice was heard saying, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him." The same voice was to be heard again the night before Jesus Christ suffered unto death.

On St. John

PART II

What must have been the horror and consternation among the guests when the report reached them that John had been beheaded, and even at that moment the troops of soldiers deputed to inflict the martyrdom and to decorate him with the martyr's crown were on the way to present the platter upon which John's head was carried with mock solemnity into the presence of the reprobate and incestuous company presided over by Herodias and her daughter and the corrupt women who revelled in the actual presence and enjoyment of the vision, delightful to their eyes, of the holy man, greater than whom had not been or shall ever be born of the children of men. The martyr of all time and the faithful precursor of the Messiah the latchet of Whose shoe he felt he was not worthy to undo! How willingly did the Baptist place his head upon the block in attestation of his faith in Christ and shed his blood that he with his born cousin should have his share in the blood-shedding of the Saviour of mankind. He had washed the children of

men with the baptism of water, the prefigurement of the true baptism of the spirit of the Holy Ghost, the true and divine baptism which washes away the sins of the world whether viewed in the individual or in society at large! "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased! Hear ye Him." And the Spirit in the form of a dove was seen to rest upon Jesus Christ as He came forth from the waters of the Jordan. John died for his faith in Christ. His was the first blood shed to cleanse the sins of men and to atone as a holocaust for the multitudinous and uncounted sins of the human race lost in the Fall.

In pictures that have come down to us of the Baptist, which are of course based upon the description of him given in the Gospels, the first lineaments of his face and dress, we are forced to believe that mortification was his characteristic virtue; discernible in him was the spirit of mortification. Guarded from the elements but by a camel's hair shirt, with a face that bespoke the macerated martyr, with hair long and unkempt, with eyes sunk beneath his shaggy eyebrows, with thoughtfulness born of intense earnestness, of meditation, and prayer, and looking askance for Him whose forerunner he was, destitute of the habiliments

usually worn of men, with a leathern girdle about his loins, bare-footed, which defied the stony and hardened by-paths, little careful of the thorns and bristles that must have pierced him beyond degree; neither the snows of winter nor the scorching heats of summer were overcome, as of something he made little account of, as resolutely bent on and absorbed in the one purpose of beholding Him Who was to come and for Whom it was his only aim in life to prepare His way, and make straight his path.

He dwelt in no palace but in the caverns and deserts around and within easy distance of the city near which he was born and spent his childhood and manhood until he encountered his Messiah before Whom he was to go and prepare for His coming.

Locusts and wild honey or grasshoppers and bitter wine, allied to sour wine, were his food.

For such a man thus mortified and preaching did all Jerusalem go out, to do penance and be baptized, and to be prepared for the Messiah. He was not garbed in soft garments, as in the houses of kings; clothing such as would become the paraphernalia of kings and court attendants who might have imagined that such was the proper and becoming dress for

him who was to meet and welcome his own cousin, who leaped in Elizabeth's womb when cognizant of His presence even in the Tabernacle of His virgin mother's body. The desert places among rocks and shambles were the dwelling places of St. John the Baptist.

John died for his faith. He could have saved himself; he could have hidden himself off from the cruelty of a bloody and atrocious death by the blandishments and fascinations of a corrupt woman or her daughter. But John was not of the stuff that purchases freedom by mercenary pay or freedom from wrong-doing by silly pretences or fear of the great and mighty. For he knew that from the blood of Cain to that of Zachariah who was slain between the temple and the altar, the prophets had been slain and put to death down to Isaiah who was sawed in two; and then to Christ Himself, to the blood of Stephen at whose stoning Paul stood by holding his garments, when the heavens opened and Stephen looking up to heaven saw Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father. Thence down the ages the same massacres in all the ages, have been repeated till the massacre which but a few years ago filled the pages of contemporary history when Christ's priests were still

put to death as sacrifices for the sins of men and the reprobate souls of men, who sealed their duty by their blood.

The fortitude of John and the intrepidity with which he underwent prison and suffering and death is clearly referred to by Jesus when he pointedly asked the Jews: "What went you out to see? Was it a reed shaken by the wind?" Or the garb with which he was clothed, and which disarmed all criticism and contempt of worldliness. Baronius tells us that there are pages of Church history that he would willingly wipe out in tears of blood. This is no less true today than in those pages stagnant with blood and sin and scandal.

John the Baptist suffered as the precursor of Christ. From the abstemious life and mortified manners of the holy martyrs, sprang the fortitude of his lofty and intrepid soul. For abstinence is the soul and animating principle of suffering and sacrifice. "He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he who taketh a city." He that ruleth himself governs all things and is himself enslaved to none. Little did it reck St. John what Herod and his courtezans could militate against him; for his spirit was free from their control and surveillance. They might kill his body or

amputate his head, but he would pass unscathed through fire and water by the narrow passage that ensured his salvation and led him into undying fame and immortal bliss. What evil could check the immortal career of such a man, contemning all that men held dearest, and choosing that which they must in their better moments, and when the soul is at rest with itself, covet and find most necessary to enable them to rise superior to all worldliness.

Suffering and sacrifice is the appointed lot of all the sons of God. He who suffers for Justice sake shall inherit the Kingdom of heaven. Jesus Himself suffered and died: did it not become the Son of Man to suffer and so enter into His Kingdom; without this ordeal Jesus would never have inherited His everlasting Kingdom, nor have been united with His Father in His glorious union begot with the powers and principalities that constitute His Court. Suffering and death were the purchase price of the souls of men. You have been redeemed not with silver or gold or precious stones, but with the precious blood of the Redeemer. A great price this surely was.

Similar was the sacrifice made by John the Baptist for becoming while greatest among men the least in the Kingdom of heaven.

Although sanctified in his mother's womb and thereby affording another reason to be proclaimed the greatest among men, and greater than all others of the children of men, yet sin may not have been entirely absent; he may have contracted some blemish upon his soul; this blemish may have required his suffering and death to be made immaculate both from original and actual sin; even if free from original as sanctification in the womb implies, yet there may have been some actual stain which could be atoned for and blotted out by the loss of his head and the sufferings it involved.

The prayers of Elizabeth may have invoked grace sufficient for all possible atonement; but of this we have no right to assume its truth. For God alone knows what blemish may yet exist and what fault is to be altogether expunged before the soul is worthy to stand before the Throne of God.

Suffering is the appointed means of salvation and sanctification: the royal road of the cross, the necessary proclaiming of our destiny: pointed out to us as our path to tread, and as the example we must all pursue. This is the divine exemplar which we must ever cherish, and love and follow. Suffering leads to pain,

suffering is pain; our appointed cross. And suffering leads to death. This is the road which Jesus pursued. Whether on the gibbet, or in the crypt, or in some niches among the marble saints, or under the tablet where we lie or on the side of some sepulchre, through pain and agony and death we must pass, unscathed we may be, yet we shall be glorified, our souls in bliss, our bodies enshrined in some vial of devotion, or commingled with the dust. The sentiment of O'Connel, our souls to God, our bodies to our native land, our hearts to the city of the Apostle, we must, into eternal glory and bliss, pass if we would inherit the part which is our inheritance forever.

Death is the crown of our life, the consummation of our hopes, the realization of all that we can best hope for or aspire to. But it is distinctly the martyr's joy, for which he cheerfully lays down his ambitions and makes every sacrifice of all he possesses to attain. This faith is his victory, this glory his everlasting bliss. This supports him in all his trials, and bears him up in enduring all that tyranny, cruelty, and oppression can inflict, for he is strengthened by the very inflictions which he is compelled to endure and make light of for sake of the incomparable weight

of glory which overwhelms him, and frees his soul from agony and suffering.

Thus died St. John the Baptist, Christ's forerunner.

Death is the crown of life; martyrdom is the crown of glory, and the consummation of our temporal career. Countless have been the number of those who found it sweet to shed their blood and sacrifice their life for their country, and for their fellow-men. The pages of history are replete with all the deeds recorded and illuminated by the acts of disinterestedness and the exploits of self sacrifice on the fields of battle to which men hastened for their country and kind.

Who can count the millions who have thus fallen. Who can enumerate all those who have deluged the earth with their blood and fertilized it with flowers that sprang from their commingled dust and made of their numbers vast hecatombs and great bulwarks which became as ramparts for their defense? Who can count the innumerable men which covered this earth in sixteen great battles which formed vast mausoleums of the dead? What as to the millions of martyrs who fell in the seven great persecutions, and in all the other warfare; in all the bloodshed which became the seed of

Christianity and the basis of civilization which would have collapsed but for the blood shed to sustain it? St. John was but a foretaster of all the sacrifices which history gives us. History gives us but feeble accounts of how the martyrs old and martyrs new, which illumine the old Testament and the New, have washed out with their blood the sins and injustices of the world. Hence we put an end to our discourse on John the Baptist.

Yet I will feel better satisfied with my performance by making my concluding words those beautiful words of the hymn as it stands in Matins and of the hymn as it stands in Lauds:

Hymn

Greatest of Prophets, messenger appointed
Paths for thy Lord and Saviour to prepare.
O for a tongue unsoiled, thy praise and wonders
Meet to declare!

From highest heaven Gabriel descending,
Gave to thy father promise of thy birth,
Gave thee thy name, and for thy life predicted
Deeds of great worth.

Yet did that father falter at the promise;
Dumb was he struck for doubting of the same,
Till at thy birth his voice, again returning
Uttered thy name.

Pent in the closet of the womb, thy Saviour
Thou didst adore within this chamber shrined;
Thus did each parent in their unborn offspring
Mysteries find.

Praise we our God, Who dwelleth in the highest,
Father, and Son, and Spirit ever blest;
And may He grant us while on earth, forgiveness,
In heaven rest. Amen.

While yet a child thou dwelleth in the desert,
Turmoil of cities leaving far away,
Lest into paths of idle conversation
Thy tongue should stray.

Rugged thy raiment from the camel taken,
Leathern the girdle around thy body bound,
Painful thy food, the locust and wild honey
Scantily found.

Prophets before thee, presaging the future,
Sang in dim strains the Day-star that should be
Thou with thine eyes the world's august Redeemer
Hadst grace to see.

Through the wide world none greater born of woman
E'er hast been seen than thou, most holy Saint,
Who didst baptize the King that came to wash us
From sin's foul taint.

Praise we our God, Who dwelleth in the highest,
Father and Son and Spirit ever blest,
And may He give us while on earth forgiveness
In heaven rest. Amen.

The Greatness of the Blessed Virgin Mary

PART I.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy:

When we contemplate the greatness of Mary, Mother of the Incarnate Word, we are at a loss whether, in order to give a fitting impression of the lofty character and sublime virtues of Mary, we should look into her history from everlasting; from the moment in which Almighty God assigned to her the part she was to fulfil, long before she came into this mundane sphere to conceive the Incarnate Word, or to consider her as the woman begotten before all ages in God's eternal counsels and meant to be designated, like another Paul, separated from mankind and womankind, for her sublime elevation as the creation of God, meant before the world began to be the woman who should crush the serpent's head, to be the restorer of the race lost by Eve's perversity, to be a second Eve, the mother of the living and the dead.

However, it makes little difference whether

we begin our lofty swing of scrutinizing of God's counsels, whether by microscope we penetrate the inward secretness of His counsels or by telescope survey the magnitude of His designs, searching from the beginning down to Eve and from Eve to her glorious patron and rescuer. For the glory of Mary is made not only the eternal scheme for the salvation of the human race in God's eternal counsels, but also all of the virtues and prerogatives and transcendent gifts of freedom from actual sin, of which St. Augustine would not even allow the name to be mentioned in anything relating to the holiness of the Mother of God: of her Immaculate Conception: of the presentation in the Temple, of the offering in token to holy Simeon: of her glorious life with her divine Son for thirty-three years until He ascended into heaven: of the years which she spent fondling Him to her bosom, nursing Him in her arms, giving Him of her substance, leading the Jewish woman to exclaim "Blessed is the womb that bore Thee and the paps that gave Thee suck"; and of all the other glorious privileges which with all her other exalted perfections led holy Elizabeth to announce to her "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." Full of every

possible grace, actual, original, conceivable and of the loftiest character; all these proceeded from the outflowing of the graces that filled her when she heard the words announced in her ears: "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

It is a matter difficult to understand why so many dislike or even grudge this divine title to be applied to her. However, this feeling is fast disappearing in the light of the virtues of the Blessed Virgin and in the light of the radiance which illumines all her character and career. There may be those who even yet, with sidelong sneer or silly contempt, pretend not to be able to understand the glorious beauty of the moral character of this sublimest among women. There may be even yet those who cannot understand why the moon may not be as glorious as the sun and yet enjoy the opaque light shed upon him by the moon, which more than compensates for the difference between the two objects and, while leaving the sun far ahead, certainly does not fail to come up to the glory and beauty of the moon.

Yes, truly, the Blessed Virgin is blessed

among women and the greatest work of the handiwork of God. No wonder the Church strives to honor her and at the same time to induce her children to honor Jesus, her Son and their brother. Purity, humility, self detachment are the sum of the virtues which adorn the character of the Blessed Virgin.

All these virtues proceed from and are the consequence of the overflowing of grace from the Blessed Virgin poured into her soul by the omniscience and omnipotence of Almighty God.

We may truly say when we look back upon the ages long since gone by and contemplate the glorious career which she has covered in God's presence, we may indeed say that the Incarnation was for Mary; that without Mary there would have been no Incarnation; that without Mary the creation of God might have miscarried, and the designs of God for the salvation of mankind might have come to naught, but for his omnipotence. He was present and cherished her virtues and her graces and rendered her a worthy object in whom and by whom the Incarnation of Christ was to be made effective. Not so much then, we may say, with all due deference, not so much was

the Incarnation for Mary, as was Mary for the Incarnation.

First among all the virtues of the Blessed Virgin we have already mentioned was her complete immunity from all actual sin, not the least particle of which was ever known to stain the hem of her garment, of which she knew not save by her hatred and contempt for the same. After her freedom from actual sin comes her Immaculate Conception: for Mary could never have been stained with any original guilt, nor could hell have thrown its darkness over her glorious path. It would have been unworthy of the providence of God to allow her from whom He took His body and His soul, the noblest creation that has proceeded from the eternal God after the creation of the soul of His divine Son, to be the victim of the original curse; for she gave Him His flesh, His nourishment; she poured into His ears the mission which He had to discharge here in this world; she watched over Him with anxious care and pursued Him when, throughout the livelong day He disappeared to do His Father's work among the doctors in the temple.

From the beginning of her existence in the unlimited ages of the past she had been present to His Father's mind and ready to present

her body for the conception of His flesh to the chaste embrace of the Holy Ghost, the spouse of Christ. All that we can think of or imagine of the sublime prerogatives of the Mother of God all resulted from the divine maternity and from the overflowing of the Holy Ghost, the Spouse of Christ, with which the soul of Jesus was anointed in the first moment of His conception. With Him during life the Holy Ghost continued to abide, imparting to Him the power of miracles, the spirit of holiness, and the spirit by which He arose glorious and immortal from the dead.

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord," she exclaims to the Archangel, "be it done unto me according to thy word." Full of grace art thou, O Mary, is the source and foundation of all her greatness. Because she was great beyond all conception she was holy with a holiness even approaching the holiness of God the eternal Father. For this holiness she consecrated herself—devotion to God's eternal will. Greatness is indeed the foundation of her sublime character; but holiness is the foundation of her greatness. We cannot conceive the one without the other; greatness and holiness can not be distinguished; holiness becomes great and great becomes holy. Full of

perfection becomes full of greatness and becomes replete with holiness. There was no virtue that the creature could possess which Mary did not possess in sovereign degree and undiminished purity.

No wonder the Church seeks to bring all her children to praise and to glorify this greatest work of God's hands; this masterpiece of His sovereign power, not only spotless was she but far in advance of all the greatness and glory that was a fitting consequence of her divine office. For every creature destined to attain this end is in due proportion Mother, truly and really, the Mother of God. All hell would have scowled at the providence that allowed Mary to be stained for one moment with any kind of sin and would have been contrary to the perfections with which she bore Him in her womb. Thirty-three years' companion; marvelous power; full of grace, we have said from the beginning, but it results from her being the Mother of God and the Spouse of the Holy Ghost. For she was the handmaid of the Lord to whom Christ was indebted for His sacred humanity; without whom He would have had no sacred humanity. To her it was due that the creation of the world which God had established was not left in ruin owing to

the craftiness and subterfuge of the evil one who attempted to inveigle the mother of mankind, who was to lie in wait for her heel, and who would have been lost if it had not been for Mary's willingness to do the will of God and to become His handmaid. The presentation in the temple, the baptism of Jesus, and the rest of Mary's actions in which He was concerned, her self devotion, her self humiliation, her meekness, her mildness, her undying solicitude for her beloved Son and for the salvation of mankind, all go to show some of the glorious attributes which God the Father had conferred upon Mary the Mother of God and the Mother of His Son.

How sublime the words which the Blessed Virgin uttered when she presented the child Jesus in the temple and placed Him in the arms of holy Simeon. With what a burst of exaltation must not the angels of God and the sons of men have heard the sublime words of the Magnificat:

My soul doth magnify the Lord
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour
For He hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaid.

For behold from henceforth all generations
shall call me blessed
For He that is mighty hath done great things
to me: and holy is His name
And His mercy is on them that fear Him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with His arm
He hath scattered the proud in the conceit
of their heart
He hath put down the mighty from their seat
and He has exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things
and the rich He hath sent away empty
He hath helpen His servant Israel in remem-
brance of His mercy
As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and
to his seed forever.

The Greatness of The Blessed Virgin Mary

PART II

The first grand prerogative which belongs to the Blessed Virgin Mary is her immunity from all actual sin, not merely actual or mortal, but it is claimed for her that she was absolutely free from even the least stain of actual sin. St. Augustine would allow of no mention of actual sin when there was a question of the Blessed Virgin Mary. For he claimed that there could be no sin, actual or other, owing to the absolute sinlessness of the Mother of God, and her overflowing sanctity to which no limit could be attached. Her own created holiness was far in advance of all that could be counted as one with her unstained innocence. It would be unworthy of God and His unblemished purity to be on the same line as her undiminished purity.

If this marvellous claim is made for her freedom from all actual sin and for her original innocence with what an outfit of sanctity must she not have been furnished to be worthy, or

at least not unworthy, of being the Mother of the Most High God.

Saints there have been in the old law and countless multitudes of saints and martyrs in the new; holiness in supreme perfection has bespangled the myriads of the firmament of heaven illumined with the loftiest with which the heavens are replete; Seraphim and Cherubim which form a living firmament which constitutes the glory of the Most High; angels and archangels casting their crowns beyond heaven —upon heaven's jasper pavement; upon the city of the living God before the Lord God who livest and reignest from eternity to eternity made living with the rivers of jasper stones that beautify the courts of heaven; but no saint or angel or archangel with its undimmed splendor can be put in comparison with the glorious sanctity and immortal beauty of the Mother of Jesus Christ—the Mother of the Incarnate God. Nor could all the splendor of them all cause the veriest speck to fall upon the glorious splendor of the sun of Mary without stain but possessing all sanctity, and shading even the sun itself.

The Fathers of the Church have exhausted all the language of literature and poetry and music in seeking to do justice to the undimmed

and undimmable praise and glory of the merits and virtues and exalted standard of the unutterable Virgin.

The most perfect creature that God has ever made. Endowed with all virtues, outranking all heavenly spirits; holy before all holiness; approaching to even the holiness of the Living God Himself; with no limits but those which the Infinite God has assigned her; next to the Godhead the most perfect creature that God has conceived and brought into being. And all this because she was made to be the Mother of God and one not unworthy of Himself.

All beings must fall prostrate in the presence of God because they are not perfect. But before the Immaculate Virgin all must prostrate as the greatest and supremest of all.

"She is not stone, who bears
Her lifeless Son with icy stiffness cold,
In her arms' tenderest fold;
But thou art stony grown,
Thou, who at grief like this hast shed no tear:
Nay, thou art more than stone,
For rocks will weep, and pour a trickling tide,
And rocks were rent in twain when Jesus
died."

After the Descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin on Pentecost Sunday, when he sat upon them in the form of tongues of fire, and imparted to them all the gifts which Christ had promised them to prepare them for their mission among men and the establishment of the Church, they separated at least for a time. St. John as his duty took the care of the Blessed Virgin, who had been confided to him by Christ on the cross by his dying breath, and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, "Son, behold Thy mother; Mother, behold thy son." This has always been regarded by the Church, and her saints and doctors, as giving the solemn custody of all the faithful to St. John; and the filial love of Christ for His mother was shown by the solemn act of assigning Mary to the loving care and perpetual embrace of the beloved disciple. It was an act of the highest love of Jesus for her from whom He had drawn His flesh and blood, His nourishment, in whose arms He was fondled, at whose paps He had been suckled, and been endeared to her by the fondest title of motherhood and made one with her by the identity of their blood. For where Mary was, there was Jesus, and where Jesus, there was Mary.

Joseph had long since gone to his reward.

But Mary remained on earth for many years the object of the tenderest solicitude of the whole apostolic college, but especially of John who always regarded her as his care and the mother whom Christ had given him, to live with until her glorious death and assumption into heaven.

She died and paid the debt of nature. For her Son Himself died although He rose from the dead to die no more. There was no commotion to disturb the Church when she went to the embrace of her Son in heaven. In process of time rumors arrived from the East announcing that she had gone to her abode. There was no mention of death. No doubt there were solemn services for her soul, now no more. Beyond all there must have been psalms and canticles and holy sacrifices for her in the glorious old cathedral in Ephesus which John had watched over, and who, doubtless, necessarily bore a large part in the divine functions. Similar were those solemn services in all other parts of the East. Gradually and by slow degrees it came, wafted on the morning breeze, that Mary had gone forever like an heavenly aroma on the air or some gentle zephyr. Like a dream it was to the children of men until, aroused, they sought to know the

truth or reality of her still living or being already dead. Search was made in the various churches where she probably would have been interred. The sepulchre was opened; Mary was gone; no trace was found; no human particle remained; nothing was discovered except the sweet aroma that her immaculate body had left behind as incense for the odor of sanctity.

Angels had come and taken away her body from where it had been laid till a commission from heaven descended and carried and transported the Immaculate Virgin into the presence of the whole court of heaven before the assembled angels and archangels, seraphim and cherubim.

This great doctrine of the assumption, so ancient in its origin and divine in its bearings, being almost the universal belief of the faithful throughout the world from time immemorial and the persuasion of all nature throughout all ages, and cherished by all most distinguished for their love of Jesus and Mary, and extending beyond, or co-extensive with all professing and cultivating her as the true mother of God once saluted by the angel as: "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." This may at any

time be declared to be an infallible utterance of the church by the supreme voice of the Vicar of Christ, in our own day. There were grave discussions by the Vatican Council as to its solemn proclamation. It is the last of the series of truths regarding the mother of Christ which remain unsettled, although the consciousness of its verity abides unshaken in the mind of the Church. At any time the oracle of the Church may turn its illumined view upon this inner knowledge and at once, by unerring definition, make known the truth. The long list of doctrines pertaining to the Blessed Virgin would naturally lead to this.

Freedom from actual sin prepared the way for belief in her to be the mother of God; being declared the mother of Christ, the God-man, second Person of the Blessed Trinity, prepared the way for the long list of the doctrines in her honor. This long series of devotions, rooted and dogmatic truths, led to belief in her Immaculate Conception.

The resurrection of Christ prepared her for her glorious resurrection and assumption into heaven before all heaven and earth, and made of her the most glorious creature that God had ever created. Next to the human soul of Jesus she was the greatest of all creatures, greater

than cherubim and seraphim, angel or archangel.

We have no wealth of language or power of utterance to sing her praises. Nothing can fall prostrate before her and worship her with an honor akin to that with which we honor her, but in due degree to that which we render to God Himself. "Dei genitrix, ora pro nobis," is our prayer and worship. We cannot honor her too much, but we love God a great deal more. There is no room for partiality. If we honor her it is because we honor Jesus; if we honor Jesus it must be because we honor Mary. Jesus is our brother and redeemer; Mary is our mother to whom we should profoundly attach ourselves and look upon her as the sheet anchor of our destiny.

Hymn

Come, let us stand to pray, when now
The darkness of the night
Recalls the awful gloom that wrapped
Golgotha's fatal height.

Come, in the spirit let us stand
Where Mary Mother stood,
Watching the great salvation wrought
Upon the bitter rood.

Come, let us stand with her in whom
Each wound that pierced the Lord,
With woe unutterable pierced
Her spirit like a sword.

Come, let us stand with her whose heart
The thirst that parched His tongue—
The thorns that tore His brow with grief
Less than His only—wrung.

Come, let us ask of her, who there
Undying Martyr, stood,
That we with her through tears may see
Salvation in the rood.

Glory to Him of Whom we pray
This grace on us send down,
To stand with her beside the cross,
With her to see the crown. Amen.

What a sea of tears and sorrow
Did the soul of Mary toss,
To and fro upon its billows,
While she wept her bitter loss;
In her arms her Jesus holding,
Torn so newly from the cross.

O that mournful Virgin Mother!
See her tears, how fast they flow
Down upon His mangled body,
Wounded side and thorny brow;
While His hands and feet she kisses—
Picture of immortal woe!

Oft and oft His arms and bosom
Fondly straining to her own!
Oft her pallid lips imprinting
On each wound of her dear Son!
Till in one last kiss of anguish
All her melting soul is gone.

Gentle Mother, we beseech thee
By thy tears and troubles sore;
By the death of thy dear offspring
By the bloody wounds He bore;
Touch our hearts with that true sorrow
Which afflicted thee of yore.

Every man is conscious of himself, what he is, what is his nature, what is his destiny, what part in life God has assigned him; nor are his capabilities unknown to him, what he is best fitted for; he knows that he has a soul spiritual and immortal; he feels that his material part is his body and its organic faculties. He feels that he is come into the world for some high purpose; that after a given period he will return again to the dust from which he sprang; and that though body and soul shall for a season be separated, yet in the interval, both body and soul shall take their share in the panorama of existence that will form the sphere of their activity between death and rising to eternal life at the last day, which may be near at hand or far distant for all that we know or long for.

Hence when the Son of Man came on earth for our redemption, He was fully conscious of His temporal life and terrestrial habitation while on earth. He did not need to be informed of what He was, or that He was that which He knew Himself to be as truly as the Eternal Father proclaimed Him, the Eternal

Son of God born before all ages, equal to and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost of Whom He was the only begotten Son, full of life and grace, from Whom He came forth from the Father and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons in One Nature and consubstantial with them both in the same Godhead.

As God is conscious of His own nature and His threefold personalities, of His Essence, so man made in the image of God by His Will, Memory and Understanding; so, similarly, but at an infinite distance, is man conscious of what he is; a creature certainly, but one made of a spiritual being, a material body with a spirit capable of thought, will and memory.

Art thou the Son of God, asked the high priest when Christ was led before Caiphas? There could be no misapprehension on this important subject upon which the whole issue of Christ's trial turned. There must be no second opinion: eternal issues hang trembling in the balance. For Christ is either the Eternal Son or He is not. Christ could not allow such a question to go unanswered or with any manner of ambiguity or peradventure.

Hence He at once, and without any hesitation made answer: "Thou sayest it." That is,

you have asked the sublimest question ever before put to the Son of God, and with His fullest consciousness and with the profoundest conviction, inspired by the Holy Ghost, made answer: "Thou sayest it." And I say further to you that you shall see the Son of Man that is, the Messiah who is now before you, coming in the clouds of heaven and surrounded with great power and majesty and begirt with the highest glory, and His angels, and blessed spirits.

No wonder that the high priest rent his garment, saying that Christ hath blasphemed, saying that He was the Son of God. For truly Christ had blasphemed if He were not truly the Son of the Most High; nor could He prevaricate or hide His coming in the attestation of the divine truth which He had so solemnly proclaimed. Since the hour when He had challenged men to accuse Him of sin, if they could, no such words, at once a defiance and an eternal verity, had been heard from His unerring utterance.

The poet is conscious of the divine afflatus that makes him a poet; the orator is full of the inspiration that enables him to control the souls of men; the politician of the sagacity that leads him instinctively or intuitively to guide the

destinies of nations and governments, in a word, every man endowed with qualities or remarkable gifts of mind or soul or heart stands out among men as God's noblest creature, and cannot be mistaken among men, or pass long among them unknown. So, similarly, the philosopher who seeks to know the causes of things and in his synthetic scope or mental comprehension feels that he is above all things, although himself unknown; or even poorly or inadequately appreciated.

If I am my mother's son or father's fond one, not only the affection that I feel towards them, but the lineaments of their character and the dispositions which I feel towards them and find imprinted in my consciousness, leads me to recognize who I am and whither I am going, in a word, to know myself, my character, and my eternal destiny. Jesus Christ knew His divinity and was desirous that men should have correct ideas of Himself, His mission into the world. One day as He and they drew near Caesarea Philippi, seeing Himself surrounded with these followers He wished to know what they and men thought of Him; it was not that He was ignorant of what they very well knew and that He knew what was their opinion of Him. He wished to give them

an occasion to proclaim their faith and to make known to the world Who this was Who had just been manifested to them by His transfiguration, when James and John and Philip had just descended from Thabor and were moved to ecstatic homage when they wished to dwell among them in three tabernacles erected to Jesus, Moses and Elias, and the glory of God shone about them and prepared them for the Passion which was just at hand; and which served to protect them from the scandal which might weaken their faith or undermine or destroy it entirely. To comfort and console them and strengthen them for the Passion just now felt was the object of this transfiguration. In that transfigurement was heard again the voice of the Eternal Father which was heard when Jesus ascended from the Jordan when baptized by St. John: "This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him."

Not only by His open assertion made sacred by divine word, but by staking His veracity upon the profession did Jesus manifest His divinity to them, but by challenging them to convict Him of sin: "Which of you will convict me of sin?" I declare the truth, why do you not believe? If I speak that which is untrue, it were contrary and I would be a false

prophet, and you would justly condemn Me of sin; if I speak the truth why do you not believe Me? "Amen, before Abraham was I am." Thus usurping or taking to Himself that which could only belong to God, that is Eternity and the Godhead.

This aspect of the matter may be summed up in a word. Jesus says that He is God: but Jesus is no liar: therefore He is truly God. This concise statement needs no lengthened amplification. It rests upon the infallible word of God: upon Whom His word is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And like the God Who gave it its record is from generation to generation. Men may err and fall into error, but with God there can be no wandering from the truth. It is as unmovable and unassailable as the mountains and worlds which He has called into existence by His omnipotent will.

Jesus, conscious of His divinity, of His oneness with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, proclaims before the high priest and his jeerers and executioners, Thou hast said it that I am the Son of God and you will see Him coming in the clouds of heaven with angels and power and majesty, when the heavens shall be rolled back, and men shall be gathered together; be-

fore Whom we shall all be manifested and our hearts turned inside out in the great and terrible day of the Lord which shall terminate the earth and heavens and all things when all shall be made anew; and a new heaven and earth shall appear before men.

In the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew we read that Jesus and His disciples drew near to Caesarea Philippi, and He, desirous of knowing what was thought of Him, put it to them what did men say of Him, "Who do men say that I am?" It was not that he was ignorant of what men thought of Him; for He knew what was in men and what they believed of Him; but He willed to give them an occasion of declaring their belief of His divinity and character and mission. And Peter the head and spokesman of them all, made reply: "Some say that Thou art Moses." This mention of Moses must have occurred to them because of his recent apparition on Mount Thabor. For otherwise it was rather a far-fetched construction to imagine that they must have thought that some said He was Moses, now two thousand years born and dead, unless perhaps they imagined that Moses must have loitered on the hills of Jerusalem when He came down from Mount Thabor.

"Some say that You are Elias," now ages disappeared in the heaven to come again at the last times. "Some say that You are Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." Jeremiah was sanctified in his mother's womb and was what we may say the forerunner of John the Baptist.

"But who do you say that I am." Simon ever forward with his impetuous faith: "Thou art Christ the Son of the Living God Who art come into the world." Christ to reward the Apostle for his confession and to pronounce the wondrous soundness and truth of Simon's profession "Blessed art thou, Simon, because not flesh and blood nor human discernment hath revealed it to you but My Father Who is in heaven. And I say to you that thou art Peter. And I will build My Church upon this rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against Thee. And I will give Thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever Thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever Thou looseth on earth shall be loosed also in heaven."

Then He charged the disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

Hence Christ was well pleased with the

declaration of the faith of the apostles. And He declares that upon this faith thus aroused He would build His Church, and what is more, that this rock of Simon's faith would be the foundation unassailable upon which His Church should stand.

How could the Church be guaranteed this indefectibility, if Peter were not himself infallible and unassailable against the enemies of the Church? If Peter were not thus welded upon and supported by the power of Christ, how could it be made the means by which the disciples could be secured against error, and made immune from all infernal or internal rising against it? The foundation of the Church and Peter's profession of faith go together and secure the inerrancy of the Church. Thus strengthened and fortified the word of Christ is pledged for all that the Church teaches. But she teaches the divinity of her Founder, for on this divinity she is the foundation and deposit of the revelation which Christ has entrusted to her, and the apostles, thus commissioned to be the teachers of mankind. In this passage of the 16th Chapter of St. Matthew is clearly evinced the Godship of Christ, and therefore His divine character and Messiahship: Thou art the Son of the Living God

Who has come into the world to teach and baptize all men and the generations yet unborn, but who shall be born before the Christ shall have come in the clouds of heaven, according to His prediction: Ye shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, surrounded with great majesty, and begirt with the powers and principalities of heaven, when all things shall be made new, created or made anew. When this world shall have failed and given away to a new development of God's omnipotence.

From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the ancients, and scribes, and chief priests, and be put to death, and the third day rise again. (St. Mat. XVI.)

I come now to that place recorded in the 21st Chapter of St. Luke when Jesus warns His disciples of the attacks which Satan had already moved, the machinations which he had already planned, and had already sought to execute against them, and through them against all the body of the faithful entrusted to them by Christ. He intimates to them that the work of the destruction had already begun, not that it was to come but that it was already at hand. He declares that it will be the aim

and sought-for consummation that Satan would attack, not so much their charity or their hope, or their fixed determination, not the flowers and leaves and blossoms and good deeds, but their faith. That it was their faith that Satan sought to undermine is clear from the fact that it was their faith that Christ had sought to strengthen, to sink it deep in its rock foundation which in Peter had already been made irremovable and against which the powers of hell would never prevail. Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath sought to shake your rock foundation in the faith which you have professed. That he might sift you as wheat, that he might beat your faith as corn is beaten in the mold or as the oxen tread it out in the treadmill. But fear not, I have supplied you with an unfailing power by which you will be enabled to overcome all his efforts, and come off unscathed and victorious for ever. What is the virtue by which this is to be accomplished? It is My prayers for you. I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, that it may never succumb to the adversary, that you may make successful issue, and thou at length converted, and when these shall have risen from and bewailed the sin which you are about to fall into, confirm thy brethren. Their se-

curity will be in clinging to you. I have prayed for all, but especially for the rock foundation upon which you are built. You are a corporate body made of many, but ONE in your corporate character. The safety of all is the safety and security of him Whom I have made your head: upon the safety and security of him is the safety and security of all the rest. Throughout the ages till I come again the pledge is given for your indefectibility and freedom from error.

Christ praying for Peter and through him praying for the apostles must have provided them with security against error and fortified them against all the machinations which He says Satan had already moved against them. He made Peter and the corporate body infallible that by the instinct of the Holy Ghost they could never fall into error or become the prey of the evil one and thus the prayer of Christ prove inefficacious and the rock foundation upon which He had promised to build His Church and render it unassailable for all time be undermined, thus withdrawing the indwelling of the Holy Ghost Whom He meant to be present with her forevermore and allowing His mystical body to be wrecked and stranded upon the tempestuous ocean of human passion

and fall an easy victim to the gates of hell and the powers of darkness.

Without this infallibility thus inherent in the Church where was the prayer which Christ breathed to His heavenly Father? "I have prayed for thee Peter that thy faith fail not, and thou once converted, confirm thy brethren." What would have long since overtaken the Church? What would have been her destiny beyond that of any other human institution? When the flood gates of error and heresy coursed the earth and almost engulfed the bark of Peter, where would she have gone if Christ had not come to her walking upon the waters and consoling and strengthening her when on the verge of destruction?

The apostles were thoroughly scandalized when their Master fell into the clutches of His persecutors and suffered death at their hands. How much greater was the scandal of the Cross when, at a later day, error covered the face of the earth, when grievous error and heresy was everywhere to be found, and the truth nowhere, when, as St. Jerome exclaimed, the whole world woke up and found itself Arian and the divinity of Christ quite effaced until the Council of Nice reaffirmed the consubstantiality of the divine Word. When we

consider the alarming state of the Church, the fall of the great school of Alexandria, the almost ineffaceable fragments of the oblivion of the great church of Asia and Africa, the spread of Mohammedanism throughout a great part of the East, when even the gates of hell assailed Christ's Church and apparently the rock of Peter was badly shaken, when heresy and error were indeed the gates of hell that rode the earth in triumph, when councils innumerable were held to suppress these infidelites and restore the faith which Christ had declared would never fail; but be the everlasting rock upon which the bark of Peter, guided and guarded by Christ, would forever ride in safety and weather the gigantic currents against which she floated and finally overcome all error and survive, like the ark floating upon the waste of waters that deluged the earth.

When we contemplate the trials and vicissitudes with which the evil one and his agents and abettors sought to destroy the faith of the apostles in order to militate his enemies against the Church and thereby destroy the work of the Incarnate Word and to put an end to the divine work for which Christ came on earth, we must ask ourselves what prevention against the evil, what security has Christ sup-

plied that He may enable the head and members of the apostolate to make issue against their arch-enemies and come off victorious from this life and death struggle in which in Christ's providence it was ordained that Satan should be discomfited and that Peter and his brethren should report the victory against the enemy, all along the ages from Christ to the present.

There can be but one answer, and that a sufficient one, given. Who assailed the apostles, and their successors? Behold Satan hath sought to have them, to undermine their faith, and through them the faith of their successors. Satan hath sought to stifle their faith; and this would have been the final blow to their heaven-appointed office. How are the heresies that have been rampant in the career of the Church to be overcome? Behold the sovereign remedy! "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and once converted, confirm thy brethren."

How is the infallible Church, the mystical spouse of Christ to continue for all time in spite of times, vicissitudes and hell's assaults? Behold the sovereign remedy. "I have prayed for thee and once converted confirm thy brethren."

How is the Incarnate Word embodied in the Church, of which the Church is the living incarnation, to be preserved unto the consummation of the world, until Christ shall come again in the clouds of heaven with power and majesty, to be perpetuated? Behold the unfailing means, the efficacious prayer, uttered by Christ to His eternal Father: "I have prayed for Thee that Thy faith fail not," and once converted and resting upon the assured foundation of Peter's profession in the divinity of Christ, that thy faith shall never give way, nor be diminished, nor shaken, nor in any wise overcome by the powers of evil!

From our consideration of the foregoing passage of St. Matthew, XX; and not less from the sense of the present passage from St. Luke, it is obvious that Christ willed that men should believe in His divinity, no less to preserve their faith that it might be forever protected from the assaults that the devil would level against it to undermine it, so that its conservation was no less an integral part of the economy of salvation than its foundation in the rock-foundation of Peter's faith.

Christ's benediction thereupon, "Blessed art thou Simon Peter for flesh and blood had not revealed it to thee but My Father Who is in

heaven. And upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. And I will give the Keys of heaven to thee. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Hence the absolute need of an infallible authority for establishing the faith and the conservation of it forever till Christ shall come again. It is to be borne in mind that Christ's blessing upon Peter's faith which was divinely inspired and Christ's prayer to the Eternal Father for its perpetual abidance in the Church concern nothing more than the divinity of Christ which He would have abide forever for the salvation of mankind, and are the very foundation of all religion and the fundamental truths of divine revelation. Hence the mighty importance, the tremendous issue of these truths taught by Christ, and the consequent obligation on every Christian to obey, accept, and believe with all his mind and heart in order to secure salvation.

Now we come to consider the last passage in which the crown is built and set upon the citadel of the Church of Christ. It was on the occasion of the interview which took place on

the banks of the sea of Tiberias, and was His last interview with His apostles. They had been fishing all the night long, but had caught nothing. On Jesus' appearance among them he commanded them to cast their nets in at the other side of the boat; and so great was the quantity caught that the apostles marvelled that the net was not broken, so great a multitude at the instance of Christ had filled their boats. They were hungry and fire was kindled with which to broil the fishes on a spot contiguous to the scene of their now successful labor. They merited the reward because of their perseverance during the dearth and prompt obedience to the voice of the Master in casting in their net again at His words. For reward is not always to be according to the merit of success; but according to the faith and loyalty of those who serve others.

When they had satisfied their long and intent gaze upon the glorious and transfigured figure that stood before them and feeling that it was indeed Jesus, their Master, for no one dared ask who He was, for they all knew and felt that it was their Saviour, the Redeemer of men, who had reappeared among them to give the most indubitable evidence that He Who had died a few days before, had reappeared

in the flesh as He had promised to rise from the grave three days hence and none of them for a single moment doubted the veracity, for they were with Him, and saw Him, and spoke with Him and ate with Him and were as intimate with Him as they had been during the years they had dwelt together as one family and as an assembly of brothers and sons of God and beloved of Christ. And whatever might have been their weakness and the grossness of their senses, there was not one of them who would not have followed Him to death and martyrdom out of love and fortitude. Overcome by their instinctive consciousness, and having feasted their bodies to repletion, and their eyes with the amazing transfiguration before them, and no one saying it is the Lord, for that they all well knew, Jesus looking upon them, with the liveliest interest and particularly upon Peter, He addressed him: "Simon, lovest thou Me more than these?" and Peter at once reciprocating the look of Jesus replied: "Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And Jesus returning the look for the moment interrupted by the answer: "Simon, lovest thou Me more than these?" And Peter: "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And Jesus again: "Lovest thou Me

more than these?" And Simon: "Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And Jesus: "Feed My lambs." And again Jesus repeated the self-same words: Peter was sorely grieved that Jesus dwelt upon the same words the third time. And Simon said: "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." And Jesus said: "Feed My sheep." And Jesus again: "Feed My sheep." Thus terminated this wonderful episode, the most marvelous of all the interviews that had ever occurred between Christ and His disciples, being the crown of the authority and office which Christ in these last few days would confer upon His beloved apostles, His agents and representatives on earth.

When Peter saw that it was the Lord, he covered himself with his cloak and cast himself into the deep. His innate modesty would not allow him to be exposed to the Lord and His apostles. Christ made Himself felt by His works, on this occasion.

The miraculous draught of the fishes being counted at one hundred and fifty-three shows that it was indeed a miracle and meant as such by our Lord and indicates His gracious condescension to be all in all to the disciples

that He might forever hold them to Himself, as disciples to their Master and Lord. Peter must have been superlatively pleased now that he is about to receive the last tenderest sign of the love of the Lord, being on the point of being made the Supreme Pastor and ruler of the divine flock.

This terminates our consideration of the three great passages of the Testament which established the divinity of Christ and shows in each place the instrument which Christ makes use of for the infusion into the Apostles of the faith which they cherished for their belief, and that which Christ supplied them with to guard this faith against its enemies and to enable them to abide invulnerable against the assaults of their adversaries; and, finally how Christ imparted to them in His command to feed and govern and direct, power to control and organize the Church which He had come on earth to create among men, and lead them in the way of eternal life and faith, hope and charity.

Thus then we take our leave of the apostles, standing on this rock foundation, secured by the promise that the gates of hell should never prevail against them; we leave them with the words of Christ reverberating in their ears and

hearts, I have prayed for thee, Peter, and for the rest of the apostles through him, whom he should confirm when he would have risen from the lapse into which he was about to fall; finally, we leave them all on the banks of Tiberias Sea, filled with the glorious hopes with which Christ had quite filled them; feed My lambs, feed My sheep. Thereafter shortly He will ascend to heaven to His Father and to their Father, to His God and to their God. No longer shall they see Him till He comes in the clouds of heaven with supreme power and majesty and begirt with the glories of judgment day when He shall come to judge this world and to condemn and reward all those who shall have done evil or good, and thus execute His sovereign law—according to their deeds of merit or demerit, when on one side shall be the good and on the other side the wicked.

Thus leaving the apostles on their pedestal of power and glory, we cannot fail to take a glance at the vision that rises before us and admonishes us of the trials of the Church of Christ in its checkered career on earth till the divine Master shall reappear.

Twenty centuries have rolled away, and through what trials and agonizing scenes has

that Church passed? Baronius, her beloved son and historian, would wipe out the scandals of the Church in tears of blood.

Countless heresies have passed over the fair face of the mystical body of Christ. Sects innumerable and countless in multitudes have obliterated in many places the Church, or left but a vestige of what was once the lovely body of Christ. One half of the Eastern Church has been reduced to a most fragmentary condition. Protestantism has wrenched one-half of the Church from its proper place, much like the one-third of the angels that fell from heaven; yet the rock of Peter's faith has stood immovable, at once the foundation of his faith and the pledge of his constancy and love.

The great churches of Africa and Asia Minor are no more. Christianity has almost perished from the religions of the East. Mohammedanism has depopulated the fair face of Christ's pasture. Heresy and schism have broken wild through the dimensions of His fold. The loosening and lessening of the bonds of ecclesiasticism has invited the invasions of Turks, Copts, Syrians, and other barbarous nations have outnumbered the orthodox; all Protestant countries, and votaries of Mohammed, all the Russias, orthodox and heterodox,

that constitute almost all the countries on the eastern side of Europe, and Nestorianism that started in the fourth century and broke away from the Church and has since remained sundered from Christ's fold, are still existing in open defiance of the Church. The great schools of Christian thought and philosophy are almost forgotten. Infidelity rules when the regimen of church organization is in contempt. Formidable religious bodies that broke away from Christian unity as early as the fifth and ninth centuries still abide in their schism and insubordination. In cowardice they seek to live and perpetuate themselves among the false doctrines and crude practices of Christian life and faith. We are forced to ask ourselves where is the unity of faith for which Christ desired and prayed in His sacerdotal prayer before He died, that all might be One in Him and in the Father that they might be all One.

We glance on the face of Christendom and where do we find this glorious unity but in the Church of Christ. Outside of Christ's mighty temple we seek in vain for such a cradle and conservatory of Divine faith. Entering into the vault of St. Peter's it doth not amaze us, for expanded by the genius of the spot the

mind has grown colossal; not only are the words of Christ on its walls, but they are also inscribed upon the tomb where repose the remains of Sts. Peter and Paul. Then as we ascend the steps of the Pantheon, the sanctuary of the pagan gods which the genius of Angelo has flung into the air to the height of more than 400 feet; at that enormous height we are arrested by the words of Christ: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail." Eighty feet higher and standing at that awful height our eyes meet the other words: "Rogavi" for all, etc., and once converted, etc. Still on the ascending scale and looking as it were over one of the parapets of heaven, while our whole being trembles in the awful abyss, we are met by those other words uttered by Christ: "Feed My lambs, feed My Sheep."

Thus the immortal words of Christ are entwined forever in Christ's mighty shrine, the greatest and most majestic of temples old or altars new, to which Diana's marvel was a cell, and to which that of Solomon was little, and to which Sophia's temple in Constantinople, once the far-famed home of Christian faith and devotion till overcome by Moham-

medanism and irreligion, dwindles into paganism or is lost in insignificance and fails to assert its once superb character as a Christian temple and abode of Christ.

Hymn

Of the Father effluence bright,
Out of light evolving light,
Light from light, unfailing ray,
Day creative of the day:

Truest Sun, upon us stream
With Thy calm perpetual beam,
In the spirit's still sunshine
Making sense and thought divine.

Seek we, too, the Father's face,
Father of almighty grace,
And of majesty excelling,
Who can purge our tainted dwelling;

Who can aid us, Who can break
Teeth of envious foes, and make
Hours of loss and pain succeed,
Guiding safe each duteous deed,

And infusing self-control,
Fragrant chastity of soul
Faith's keen flame to soar on high
Incorrupt simplicity.

Christ Himself for food be given
Faith become the cup of heaven,
Out of which the joy is quaffed
Of the spirit's sobering draught.

With that joy replenished
Morn shall glow with modest red,
Noon with beaming faith be bright,
Eve be soft without twilight.

It has dawned, upon our way,
Father in Thy Word, this day,
In Thy Father Word divine,
From Thy cloudy pillar shine.

To the Father, and the Son
And the Spirit, Three in One,
As of old, and as in heaven,
Now and here be glory given.

—*Newman.*

Certain Memorabilia Upon the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ

Pilate marvelled and was even alarmed at the accounts which he had heard and which were disclosed to him by witnesses worthy of belief; and the exhibitions of divine power narrated to him by what he had profusely spread before him by friends and enemies, chief among them being His mother and apostles and Joseph of Arimathea, and the miracles of feeding multitudes, and resuscitating the dead, he at once became apprehensive lest some divinity, made in the form of a man, as was often the belief of the pagans, had come on earth for some purpose unknown and unknowable to him, but which he readily believed, as would appear from the tinge of politico-theoligico shown by Pilate's question: "What is truth: art Thou a King?" This would be confirmed by his further interrogation: "Art Thou a king," and the answer of Jesus: 'Thou sayest that I am a king; for this was I born and for this camest I into the world." Hence, to avoid the fatal error of condemnation and to preclude the possibility

of being delated to the emperor, and to avoid any further encounter with the Jews whose rancor he had already incurred by murdering them in the temple, thereby mixing their blood with their sacrifices,—in a word, to do nothing that could further bring the abomination of desolation into their temple,—while hesitating what steps to pursue, he would rescue and save, if it could be done without risk to himself, the reputed criminal from His enemies. But he is further alarmed when to his utter dismay, and contrary to all his intentions, Jesus and His accusers are remanded by Herod with scorn, Jesus bearing upon Him the garment that marked Him as a fool. Thus he would throw upon Herod the responsibility which he had sought to shift from himself. By cunning artifice and political chicanery, Pilate would induce the mob to loosen His bonds and to release Him from the toils which had been woven about Him, imperilling His life.

Pilate was essentially a weak man whom public clamor and noisy demonstration could easily thwart and overcome. His was not the intrepid and resolute soul that would defy the storm elements and shake the heavens for virtue's cause. He was thoroughly a Roman politician, self-seeking, self-grasping, caring

for no one, or nothing but himself and his ambitions and cupidity. Now the gentle sex would gladly throw oil and water upon the tumultuous consternation. Hence Pilate's wife is troubled but too truly with dreams, day and night, in the interest of and for sake of, the innocent and righteous man; for she had suffered sorely because of a dream that very day. She was also moved by her wifely affection, lest anything should befall her lordly husband and contemptible citizen. The portents that accompanied the pagan sacrifices had shaken her faith and that of the people in the stability of the heathen gods, and with the plottings of the evil one had disturbed the souls of men. Hence she would console him. This consolation soon finds its way through his wife to Pilate; he is unnerved, and puts Jesus again on the questionnaire, and at the end of the process declares that he finds nothing deserving of death in Him; yet grown faint-hearted by the threats and fierce denunciations of the Jewish priests, he continues fearful and anxious and not knowing what to do.

Yet here was a good hour for Pilate to restore his friendship with Herod. They had been on the outs. So he sent Jesus to him for he had heard that Herod was very anxious to

see the much mentioned Galilean, that he might see some sign or legerdemain from Him, by which to show him and his courtiers what might be amusing. But Jesus knew what was in Herod no less than He knew what passed in other men. He determined to hold His peace, and not even by a word, much less a wonder, would he answer to the wicked curiosity of that fox, as Jesus termed him,—the only word that savored of irony and sarcasm, although well merited, that the meek and patient Jesus ever spoke. Even before contumely and reproach, He never retorted, except to demand from the servant of the high priest, "why strikest thou Me, for speaking the truth?" For if not true, why did he not evince its falsity?

Pilate was no longer able to resist or defy the howling clamors of the mob and its irresistible aggressiveness and insolent impudence, with his wife, like an aspen leaf, trembling lest he should be delated to the Emperor whom he feared because if accused of disloyalty or disaffection his days would be nothing, at length hands Jesus into the hands of the Jews, to be done by as they would, yet disavowing any part in the intended homicide, and anxious to avoid any share in the guilt which the uttered

imprecations augured against them. "His blood be on ourselves and on our children," which was fully fulfilled a few years subsequent when the Roman armies surrounded Jerusalem, and left not stone upon a stone.

Judas in withering remorse and unquenchable sorrow willingly and more would retract his false testimony against the innocent Son of Man and give back the iniquitous silver pieces which he had received for the price of His blood, in the presence of the high priest in the temple, and truly but basely confesses his iniquity and rank ingratitude which crushed him to the earth, and owns his hireling perfidy, and begs the tribunal to reconsider and revoke the sentence which had been uttered for His death.

But what was that to them, was their bitter retort. He had got the reward of his iniquity. What more could be expected from a contract freely entered into and observed by them. They scorned his money. It was cast on the sanctuary floor. It was too base to touch; it were pollution to have to do with blood money. It could not be admitted into the mart of men. If at all, it could only be used for some unmentionable purpose, something that would be lower than the notice of men. Fit only to pur-

chase some inferior land out of which the good had been dug for the baking of brick where strangers and outcasts could be buried for which even a marsh would be too valuable. Hence let it be employed for this ignoble purpose; even if bought for gold or silver; for otherwise, there would be a curse upon it, as the sanctimonious Jews would persuade themselves; at any rate, they would not look upon it.

Judas was stimulated and driven to despair by his pangs of conscience; for he would fain persuade himself that Christ's betrayal would never lead to such enormous cruelty as hanging on the cross, but that He would escape, as He had formerly gone out from His pursuers and got away, without injury to His life. But this time there was no escape but hanging on the cross with the pair of robbers or cut-throats who were already sentenced to their punishment. Conscience was now too powerful for Judas, Calvary was too ignominious and unheard of for Christ. Even under that condemnation the penitent thief could be saved and accompany Christ into Paradise, while under the same sentence the unrepentant cut-throat could and did go down to hell.

Christ was then led and in part hoisted to

the hill of skulls where some had believed the body of Adam was interred,—a place where many an innocent or recovered penitent had died and risen again to Christ. He was crucified, that is, nailed to the cross, not tied thereon; and amidst the most thrilling agony and torture, remained for three hours until when to satisfy the ceremonious qualms of the Jews He was taken down and buried in the new vault hewed out of the rock for the rich Jew Nicodemus. After a period, at the request of the Jews, He was taken down and delivered into the arms of His mother and faithful disciples. The holy women then, in part, anointed the body of Jesus, intending to return some days later to complete the function, and for this purpose they did return on the morning when the stone was found rolled back and Jesus had gone, leaving His habiliments, and the two angels in the place where He had lain. Which occasion gave the women, and through them the Apostles and the disciples, and through them the world, the seal and divine attestation that God was come among men, that having been crucified for men, He came glorious and immortal from death to die no more but to live forever in the eternal embrace of His Father, and the joy and jubila-

tion of the angels, spirits and the perfected souls of the elect.

O the signs, the portentous signs that accompanied that death and interment and resurrection within the next few days!

The Blessed Virgin must have been consoled with some comfort that she received, vouchsafed her by the knowledge which in that hour must have been poured into her soul of why and wherefore her immaculate Son was doomed to so dreadful a death. And this must have reconciled her motherly soul to the passion which she in her heart and being must have endured. She was afterwards led away by St. John into whose hands Christ had commended her care. Under his roof she received all that John could bestow upon her; peace, resignation and patience, and glory undiminished.

Christ expires amidst the most alarming signs of the power and presence of the Father, and of the angels assembled about, and who in heaven fell down in transports of amazement before the Lamb, slain from the beginning, and now actually slaughtered before the eyes of all! The fulness of time was verified. Signs appalling if ever such signs were appalling. I cannot dwell upon all the signs and

proofs of the sacrifice which crowned the hill of Calvary on that awful day, the immolation of the Incarnate Word. Verily this was indeed the Son of God; was the least confession that from his heart the centurion could emit; and such persuasion was the unbidden heartfelt feeling and open declaration of all who there stood around, and heard Him scoffed at and jeered at by the base crowd, that even yet called out: "Let us see, He calls for Elias, let us wait till Elias comes to rescue Him, as He cannot save Himself, although He claims to have saved many." But Elias came not because he was not wanted to interrupt the sacrifice which was sought by the Father, and voluntarily offered and given by the Divine Son, Who had come into the world, not to gratify human ingratitude, or to make a mockery of the gracious goodness of God, or humor the curiosity of those seeking a miracle, or a demonstration which would be similar to that which they called for when they demanded a sign from heaven, to make them believe the truth. He gave no sign; His lips were closed upon the eternal verity which was in His heart; He died under the reproach of calumny; yet He died imperturbed in spirit. He could have transmitted the lie to go down

the ages yet to come. He would leave the disclosure to the manifestation of His Eternal Father. He, conscious of the truth, was content with this unfailing consolation.

The souls of the three crucified are carried by angels to their future abode in the next world. Hell and Limbo bestir themselves to give a welcome to them on their advent. The dead are revivified. All the kings once of this world descend from their thrones and rise to greet the great Saviour: all the kings of the earth, discarding the habiliments of their tombs, come forth with all the princes and all the great men, Judaical or pagan or highly gifted, saints, poets, orators, all who found a durance in Limbo. The penitent, and impenitent are led to their respective abodes of rest by the Messiah or by the princes of this world; the gates of death are thrown open to all who would enter Paradise or through bliss or misery. Jesus, the Redeemer is come in to Limbo to announce the joyful news of this ransom, the termination of their suffering,—their entrance into everlasting life. All this will soon be accomplished by the resurrection. The years that have passed during their long detention will be as if they were not. All those who were faithful to conscience and to their

circumscribed knowledge will obtain salvation; all who, Christian or heathen or otherwise, were baptized by the will of a great desire for God and righteousness. These are the true Israelites; they are borne on the arms of Christ into Paradise, and are the first fruits of His redemption, washed all clean in His wholesome and life-giving blood. They are a part of those detained in Limbo, earnestly looking forward to their redemption.

The bodies are taken down from the cross on that great festival lest the Sabbath should be profaned as the Jews would have it. "For that was a great Sabbath," yes, greater than ever the Jews imagined it could be. For on it disappeared and forever all the paschs that for centuries Judaism had ever given before it; it was the reality of all emblems; the substance of all figures; the fulfilling of all predictions, the crown and continuation of all the prophets longed for, in whose prospect they were glad and rejoiced. The hopes of mankind; the salvation of the elect; the condemnation of the reprobate who rejected the promises and discarded all the elect, and those exalted to heaven.

The friends of Jesus, headed by Joseph of Arimathea, repaired to Pilate and solicited the

body of Jesus. Then with the help of Nicodemus and accompanied by women who were looking for the kingdom of heaven and the pious women who had followed Jesus to His death, partially embalmed and swathed in linen, they placed the body in the vault hard by to Calvary. A stone is rolled against the entrance; on account of the near advent of the Sabbath just at hand; they return to Jerusalem to find what was still further necessary to finish the embalming after the close of the second day. Before this is done the shades of night are more than falling, it is already dark with the black pall with which night covers the world, the pall that hides for the major part the day.

Thus night falls upon the sepulchre of Jesus. The holy women, witnesses of Jesus's death and burial, withdraw to mourn their grief and gain whatever consolation was afforded by meditation on the words and assuring hopes that He had given them while yet alive. The angels still watched and adored Him; dead in body, He was yet alive, and Who they knew would soon manifest that life by coming forth from that canopy of earth, that separated earth from heaven. The stars in heaven were the lamps that shed a benign though feeble

yet undying light upon that shrine whence shortly with Jesus will issue a divine influence that shall recreate the world and the souls of men. The sun not yet recovered from its eclipse arose angrily upon a world stained with Deicide; the moon slowly withdraws her opaqueness; the stars had not yet recovered their amazement; the waves still beat upon the ocean strand; the sea throbbed with its recurring tides.

The elect returned home, fell down in adoration before the remains of Him, singing their requiem of eternity, still in the tomb, Who but a few hours before in painful agony hung upon the cross, and was taken down only out of compliance with the superstitious dread of the Jews, who having killed the Son of Man, were now only concerned that there should be naught to profane the silly and empty function of that great Sabbath day.

On the Saturday after the Crucifixion,—which was the Jewish Sabbath,—and after the death and burial of Christ, at the request of the Jewish Sanhedrin, who reminded the Roman authorities that that impostor, while still alive, had declared that He would rise; and lest the last error should be worse than the first, a body of soldiers were placed in charge

of the tomb to anticipate what they called fraud or imposture. They were stationed with every precaution before the sepulchre sealed with Roman seal and which was inviolable—whose fracture involved severe punishments to the violators. The Sabbath was passed without further incident except the continued and dire though quiet heart burnings and misgivings and doubts of Deicide which the Jews could not repress.

The disciples and St. John and the Blessed Virgin with the other holy women returned to rest and lamentation. No doubt they were all consoled with the visions of hope and the near realization of all the promises with which Christ had animated them. No one would give way to despair till the time which must be so near at hand. Three days had given way to obvious facts and to a risen Christ. Hope in the meanwhile rested their heads and filled their dreams. Their waking hours were passed in pondering the divine assurance.

Early in the morning, when they had gone to visit the body not yet fully prepared for final interment, the stone is rolled back, the habiliments of the dead are laid aside, the bonds of death give way, the malefactor rises to life, Christ is no longer there, but in His

stead angels at the head and feet of where He had been laid: heaven has dissolved the death decree, "Dust thou art and into dust thou shalt return." Men have gone down to the grave and hell; but not therein to abide. For what profit to lose their life and blood, and remain forever in the earth. In spite of death and the grave they shall arise, casting aside their mortality and putting on immortality. They will then exclaim: "O, Grave! where is thy victory; O, Death! where is thy sting." Through fire and water and the narrow passage shall they return to paradise, to be received with angels and the elect souls of men.

The vision of angels announces Christ to be alive: that they have seen Him and from Him received instructions to seek the disciples and make known to them what they have heard. They hasten to Jerusalem: Peter and John return with them to the sepulchre, for the disciples would see this stupendous fact for themselves: nothing less would convince them and remove their incredulity, and assure them that it was not all a dream, or error or delusion on the part of the women. The words "My Lord and my God" had not been spoken, much less pondered, except by those to whom they had been personally addressed. Again they re-

turn to their homes to await the developments of the consolatory messages which the angels had given. The guards did not hasten, as would have been but natural, to escape reproof for their own dereliction of duty if they dared to palm upon them the lie which the priests had plotted for them—that the disciples came and stole the body while they slept. This was the silly and atrocious means by which they would attempt to suppress the truth, when asleep; when asleep! For, how did they know that the body was stolen, and that, too, when asleep, and by the disciples? Could no one else have been partaker in the theft?

Bribes were employed by the Jews to get Judas to condemn Christ. Bribes are now the readiest means by which to conceal the truth. Why did the Jews not hurry to employ this ready-at-hand device? But it was a transparent lie, which none but those steeped in malice would have allowed their blindness and silliness to invent. But a pretext they must finally have; whether it was a good one or a bad one, it was the only one that might set their tongues wagging and delude those interested and stand in the place of the truth which they had concealed in their hearts. For there is nothing repeated continuously that will not

to many assume the appearance of truth, such as counterfeit money elaborated with skill and refined to perfection, may come to pass and be received as native born truth. The guard of soldiers had been appointed at the earnest petition of the Jews; for, said they, that seducer has declared that He would rise again, and the last error would be worse than the former. Hence, it concerned all that there should be no possible escape for Christ to be privately carried off by his apostles and the theft being bruited abroad would come to be accepted as true, and thus color would be given to the prediction of Christ. This was, in the minds of the Jews, the worse error which they abhorred and strove by every effort to avoid.

While Christ lay in the tomb, the disciples betook themselves to lamentation and prayer, but were yet animated by hope of seeing Christ's resurrection after the three days as He had promised and had given them as a proof of His divinity Jonas in the whale's belly for three days, and His coming to life again after His own three days in the bosom of the earth. They had all reason to guard against despair and to look with confidence to the yet unredeemed word of Jesus.

Early on the morning of the third day the

grasp of death was relaxed! Christ throws aside the bonds of death, and the portals of Limbo. He enters into His dearly bought life for His blood and death, the purchase price of salvation.

The holy women provided with spices and other ointments to complete the embalming of the body of Jesus, very early on Sunday morning, repaired to the sepulchre quite impressed with the removal of the huge stone that had been rolled against it; and asking themselves who would remove it that they might have access to the vault. Lo, looking, they saw it rolled back, the portal left open, the body no longer in the place where it had been laid, but not within sight anywhere. Struck with profound amazement, they beheld angels at the head and feet, the cerements which had enwrapped the body carefully put aside. The angels broke the silence with the words, "We know whom ye seek, Jesus of Nazareth; He is no longer here; but go to His brethren and give them the tidings of His rising and disappearance." The women eagerly sought the homes of Peter and John, and revealed to them what they had seen and heard from the angels. The disciples amazed, eagerly sought the tomb, accompanied by the women. They,

coming, saw all that they had said verified: an empty tomb, the folded habiliments, the angels in custody of the tomb, who declared that Jesus was alive and commanded them to make known the glad news to His disciples in Jerusalem, whither they all repaired in hope of meeting Jesus or of announcing to them the long sought information. For they knew that it behooved Jesus to suffer and die, and rise again, and so enter into His glory; the reward which was His by right of His obedience to the Father, and the sufferings which He had endured.

However, far beyond even the visible signs were those supplied by the resuscitation of the dead—the appearances to many of those who had been long since in their interment; no doubt there were commotions among the heavenly spirits when they saw the Lord of Glory and the God of Heaven die upon a cross; but even this was small to the consternation that seized Satan and the powers of hell when they realized what before they had not dreamed of, that the Crucified God was the seed of the woman who was foreordained to crush the serpent's head lying in wait at her heel, that should bring restoration of Paradise and salvation to mankind, the throwing open of heaven's gates, the casting out of the

evil one; death disarmed, darkness chained, the ravenous jaws of death, the universal decree of mortality, abolished, giving way to immortal life—in a word, all men redeemed and all through the gratuitous mercy of Christ, bought by no human sacrifice, but by the shedding of His blood—all the fulfillment of the Father's eternal counsels; the erection of faith, hope and charity, the pillars that support the new heavens and the new earth.

I have said but little on the external prodigies which signalized the crucifixion of Christ. And yet what astounding events are to be read in the Scripture accounts of that tremendous day—the most momentous of all the days that have marked the history of the world—the most decisive for mankind of all the events that men have recorded. They were proofs that should necessarily accompany the closing scene in the Passion and Death of the Son of Man. They were events that struck the senses of all men, and brought home to them more by far than the sign in the heavens which the Jews sought for.

The guards on seeing what had taken place full of consternation ran away overcome by fright to seek courage from the Jewish leaders. They trembled not so much for themselves as

for the portentous signs which they had witnessed and at which appalled, they stood aghast. The earth was shaken, the rocks were torn and riven with lightning, the dead arose and appeared to many; the watch shared the belief of the centurion on seeing all about them and exclaimed: "This verily was the Son of God; behold the anger at once and the power of the Most High God." "Either the world goes to ruin, or the God of Nature suffers," exclaimed Dionysius the Areopagite.

These were the culmination of the miracles and marvels, and the luminous fulfillment of prophecies from ages long since gone by and the forecasting of the truths which would be in the future. The external evidenced the internal. God's power was invoked and summoned to manifest for all time all the truths for which Christ had laid down His life, to all men, and vouched for and attested.

The guards in the meanwhile betook themselves to the Jewish priests and others in power in the Sanhedrin to concert measures for their safety, anxious to make known to them what they had known as occurring during the night. A conspiracy was entered into with the soldiers for the payment of a large sum, charging them that they should accuse

the disciples with stealing the body, while they were asleep. Thus a well devised and elaborated and malicious service was concocted. Thus, truly, the last error of allowing the occult withdrawal or stealing of the body was made worse than the first, as the priests had declared.

On that same day, but later, Jesus appeared to Peter and John on the road to Emmaus, sixty furlongs distant. At first they did not recognize Him, but afterwards discerned Him in the breaking of bread. Jesus tarried with them several hours. While He did not at once make known His identity, yet before the day was too well advanced He disclosed Himself by signs and conversation and reprovals of their slowness to believe. After His departure they remembered how their hearts, by His words, warmed to Him while He expounded the prophets and all things that had been written of Him. Then He disappeared to make another apparition to them in a few hours.

In the meanwhile Thomas put in an appearance to the disciples who declared to him that Jesus had appeared to them. He declared that not until he could put his hand into His side and his finger in the prints in His hands and feet, would he believe. Later, Jesus stood

amidst them, and called upon Thomas to put his hand in His side and his fingers in the nail prints. Thomas, till then incredulous, overcome by the manifest evidence, exclaimed: "My Lord and my God." To which Jesus, replying: "Blessed art thou, Thomas, because thou hast seen and believed; but more blessed is he that has not seen, and yet believed." No fewer than eleven times did Jesus appear to the disciples. He ate with them; He touched them; He talked with them, making known to them the mysteries of His Kingdom, establishing His Sacraments; and all of which have come down from Him in the sacred traditions of the Church. For all that He thus taught them belongs to the deposit of faith no less than the truths recorded in the Gospels.

All His promises to the apostles and especially those to Peter, were fulfilled during this period which He spent with them after His resurrection. The promise to His Church, His declaration of how the gates of hell would assail, but never overcome the Church: "I have prayed for thee, and, once converted, confirm thy brethren"; the solemn warning which He gave them of the efforts of hell against His Church, already engines of destruction put in motion, machinations that would last till He would come again; all necessary power to

feed and govern the Church imparted on the banks of the sea of Tiberias, whence He came upon them, "they having caught nothing." The promises of all that had been made before His resurrection, the fulfillment of them all was bestowed on this occasion;—lambs and sheep all constitute His Church. "Feed them," that is, rule, and govern, and teach them, and that, too, with authority.

But what better or what worse could the infernal legions do consistently with their fixed purpose of doing evil and wrong than to seek to nullify all these mercies purchased by the Crucifixion, and make them of no avail? All this they can do by levelling assaults against the Church, against the apostles by persecution, by the murder of the saints and martyrs, by false philosophy, by heresy and error, schisms, by fanaticism, by the freezing and drying up of charity and love and benevolence, by rancor of anti-fraternal and internecine strife, and factious enmities. All these and more would be the machinations which hell at once had started against the apostles, and their successors, that "he might sift them as wheat and scatter them to the winds," and destroy the Church, which is to survive and endure for ever. No wonder that Christ would

pray for them that their faith should never fail, and that they would forever stand upon the immovable rock of Peter and his faith.

The fortieth day Christ appears to the disciples on Mount Olivet, and after solemnly addressing them, and promising them the Paraclete Who would enlighten and strengthen them, He foretells the vicissitudes of His Church, which shall last till He come again—to survive till the consummation of all things. Then he leads them forth to a high eminence, imparts to them His Benediction when, in their presence, He ascends triumphantly through the clouds into the heavens, and with the loud hosannahs sits on the right hand of God to be our everlasting advocate and Paraclete, and to make perpetual intercession for us—that we may have such an one as knows how to sympathize with us and for us, and supply whatever may be wanting to our poor insufficiency and sinfulness.—Amen.

Hymn

He Who once, in righteous vengeance,
Whelmed the world beneath the flood.
Once again in mercy cleansed it
With the stream of His own blood,
Coming from His throne on high
On the painful cross to die.

O the wisdom of the Eternal!
O its depth and height divine!
O the sweetness of that mercy
Which in Jesus Christ doth shine!
Slaves we were condemned to die,
Our King pays the penalty.

When before the Judge we tremble
Conscious of His broken laws,
May this blood in that dread hour,
Cry aloud and plead our cause—
Bid our guilty terrors cease
Be our pardon and our peace.

Prince and author of salvation!
Lord of majesty supreme!
Jesu, praise to Thee be given
By the world Thou didst redeem!
Who with the Father and the Spirit
Reignest in eternal merit. Amen.

Forth let the long procession stream
And through the streets in order wend;
Let the bright waving line of torches gleam
The solemn chant ascend.

While we with tears and sighs profound
That memorable blood record
Which, stretched on His hard cross, from many a wound,
The dying Jesus poured.

By the first Adam's fatal sin
Came death upon the human race;
In this new Adam doth new life begin,
And everlasting grace.

For scarce the Father heard from heaven
The cry of His expiring Son,
When in that cry our sins were all forgiven
And boundless pardons won.

Henceforth, whoso in that dear blood
Washeth, shall lose his every stain,
And in immortal roseate beauty robed,
An angel's likeness gain.

Only, run thou with courage on
Straight to the goal set in the skies;
He Who assists thy course will give thee soon
The everlasting prize.

Father Supreme! vouchsafe that we,
For whom Thine Only Son was slain
And whom Thine Holy Ghost doth sanctify,
May heavenly joys attain.—Amen.

The Transfiguration and Passion of Christ and Forgiveness of Sin.

The object of Christ in His transfiguration was to show the apostles the end for which they were working, the glory that was to be their reward, the bliss that was to be the compensation of those who leave father, mother, sister, or brother for His Name's sake. By this He would animate them to perseverance. As John xix:5, when Thomas said: "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest: and how can we know the way?"

The glorious manifestation of the transfiguration was also vouchsafed them to comfort and strengthen them in the trial which their faith was soon to undergo in His passion and death—that they might be fortified against the assaults of the demon; as in Luke xxii: 31-2: "It behooved Christ to suffer, and to enter into His glory;" to which also He leads those who would follow the steps of His passion. For through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. In this passage referred to of St. Luke we learn how the evil one would seek to have them in his power and

to subject them; to scatter them; to winnow them as wheat by reason of what to human eyes might seem His season of weakness, and of His abandonment by His eternal Father. "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan had sought you, to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith may not fail: and thou when thou turnest, confirm thy brethren." The remembrance of the scene of His transfiguration and its incidents and personages, particularly the voice of heaven from Thabor would sustain their spirits and hopes when they would see their Master in the hands of His enemies, and who apparently could do with Him what they wished. "He will reform our vile body conformably to His glorious body," Phil. 3.

The glory which Christ exhibited in His transfiguration was always with Him—from even the moment of His conception. But it was not manifested. For if manifested men could no longer question His divinity, and perforce would have never crucified Him: in this His mission would have been frustrated. He did not come into the world to escape, but to embrace death as the price of our redemption. Hence no sign should be allowed to overwhelm the free will of men, and to hold

their hands while in malice and ignorance they fulfilled God's will in putting to death the Victim appointed for men's salvation. He gave proof sufficient for those who would believe: for those not minded to believe even greater proof, while hindering the mission of Christ, would, probably, not have sufficed to draw men to Him. Christ's glory on this occasion was not the glory of one glorified; for He was not yet glorified, not yet having died: it was the glory of the very Godhead, which radiated and shone through His body. It was not so much a miracle as the cessation of a miracle.

Let us employ the words of St. Thomas: "The glory or clarity of a glorified body is derived from the glory of the soul." And likewise the glory of the body of Christ in His transfiguration flows from His divinity and from the glory of His soul. That from the beginning of the conception of Christ, the glory of the soul did not overflow the body, was by a certain divine dispensation, that in a passable body (capable of suffering), He should fulfill all the mysteries of our redemption. Nor yet by this was the power taken from Christ of drawing the glory of His soul to His body. And this, indeed, He did as

much for the brightness of His glory in the transfiguration; yet otherwise than in a glorified body. For to a body glorified, the glory overflows from the soul, as a quality which is permanently affecting the body; whence to shine corporally is not miraculous in a glorified body; but to the body of Christ in the transfiguration the glory was derived from the divinity and His soul, not after the manner of a permanent quality and affecting the body itself, but rather or more after the manner of a transient affection, as when the atmosphere is illuminated by the sun; when that light appearing in the body of Christ was miraculous as this very thing that He walked upon the waves.

Moses, not probably in his own body, but in one assumed as angels had often done, Elias from some neighboring hill where he had disappeared, both representing the Old Law; Peter, James and John representing the New, both giving testimony on Christ's divinity; three that in the word of two or three every word should stand. From its nature, restricted to a few, the transfiguration was to be a matter of belief rather than of sight. For, otherwise, Christ should be transfigured before each and every son of man. Even if He ap-

peared before all men in His generation, those in succeeding generations would have to accept it on faith. Therefore it was witnessed by them alone. Tell no man what you have seen, because, if noised abroad and men believed, redemption could never have taken place: if not believed by men its publication would have been useless; besides the incredulous would have mocked at it, seeing His crucifixion and death. Wait till the Son of Man be risen from the dead, and the greater miracle will include the lesser, and make men readier to believe: wait till when its divulgement can no longer hinder My death; wait till all things are fulfilled that are written of Me, and let it then be proclaimed with the other works that I have wrought to prove "that the Father is in Me and I in Him;" for "to this evil and adulterous generation that seeks signs, a sign shall not be given, except the sign of Jonas in the whale's belly. This is the sign of My resurrection, the miracle that shall not be wrought till the work of redemption is accomplished. But, in the meanwhile, for your consolation and strength, hear the attesting voice of God, heard before by the Jordan, and yet to be heard by you when I shall before My passion beseech the Eternal Father to glorify Me—

hear the word, 'this is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.' "

This glory is our destiny and immortal bliss. Now we are the sons of God, made like to Him, by our adoption as such, because of our likeness to the Eternal Son made man for our redemption.

Our adoption as sons of God is effected by a certain conformity of likeness to the natural Son of God: first by grace, which is an imperfect conformity; secondly, by the glory of our heavenly destiny, which is perfect or complete conformity—according to the words of St. John 1: 3, 2: "Now we are the sons of God; it hath not appeared what we shall be: because we know when He shall have appeared, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him, as *He is*. Because, therefore, we obtain grace by baptism, in the transfiguration as previously shown is the light of future glory. Accordingly, both in baptism and in the transfiguration it behooved that the natural filiation of Christ should be manifested by the testimony of the Father; because He alone is perfectly conscious of the Spirit." St. Thomas, Part III, 2 Quest xlv.

"Who will convict me of sin?" asks our Lord, in the Gospel on Passion Sunday, which

I have just read to you. Now that He is about to suffer, He would have all men know His innocence, and for whom and what He suffers. It is placed before us in view of His passion a few weeks hence. To make us realize it, we must know Who it is that suffers. For the divine character gives a meaning, and height and depth and infinitude to His sufferings which we must ponder to bring it home to the mind.

Who is it that suffers? The Eternal Word, the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity, God made Man for our salvation; the Creator and Lord of angels and of men and of all things, visible and invisible; the brightness of the eternal glory of the Father; the Heir into Whose hands and dominion the Almighty Father has delivered the world and all that He has made; Who made all the world; Who upholds and sustains and upon Whom depends all creation; without Whom all things would relapse back into annihilation or the nothingness from which they have all issued. At His crucifixion, the rocks were rent out of sympathy for their dying Lord. With what vehemence should not the living stones, the souls redeemed with His blood, be pierced seeing all this. Behold Him contemplating all sins and

atoning for and obliterating all sins by a more than superabundant satisfaction. For whom does He suffer? For all the sins of men, dead and living, and yet to live and for those still sinning; even for his executioners; for the reprobate or back-slider, even of today, as far as in him lies, re-crucifies Him and makes a mockery of His passion and death. Guiltier far than the Jews, who were His actual executioners, are those moral executioners who today put Him to death by their continued iniquities and stubborn wickedness.

For what does He suffer? All sins, personal or actual and original. All sins from the beginning and that shall be till the end of time. The original sin of the race; Sodom and Gomorrah, and all the Sodoms and Gomorrahs that have till now disgraced the earth and summoned vengeance and hell fire upon the children of men; the sins that made necessary the incarnation and death of the Incarnate God; delivered to suffering and death by His Father and Himself. For He hath laid upon Him the iniquities of us all, which He willingly and mercifully bore. "For the transgression of My people have I struck Him." He was offered because He willed it. "Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not; then said I, Be-

hold, I come. In the head of the book it is written of Me that I should do Thy Will, O God."

He suffered in body. The mere anticipation of His sufferings and death caused His sweat of blood. No part of His body was exempted from pain and agony. He suffered in mind and soul. The martyrs were replenished with ice in the midst of their torments; they were great sufferers, no less. St. Paul exclaims: "I rejoice; I rejoice, I am filled with comfort. I am exceedingly joyful in our tribulation." Christ's sufferings were not so tempered or modified as to be easily borne; the consolation of the Godhead and the consciousness of innocence were shut off from Him by His Own act; the glory and support of the Deity was withdrawn voluntarily to some loftier or unknown part of His soul. He allowed pain and sorrow and grief to fill His soul till He felt Himself to be what—but in seeming He never could be—a sinner, and outcast from men, and abandoned by His eternal Father for the sins of men, which He had come on earth to suffer and die for and to satisfy the justice of God that men might be saved by the inscrutable design of God, and the unfathomable abyss of divine mercy.

The fall of Adam and the miseries which it entailed were the outcome of Adam's fall from the supernatural state in which he had been created. The singular love with which God hath preserved the human race, seeing that He willed to save it at the price of the blood of His only begotten Son is shown most marvelously in the crucifixion and death of the divine Son. There is nothing to declare fully, or, at all, the height and depth and breadth and the inconceivable love of Jesus Christ for the souls of men. Many and various are the facts which nature and history supplies to give us some feeble insight into this amazing love of God for man. But they are all absolutely incapable of yielding a true conception of His marvelous love. "Greater love than this no man hath than that he lay down his life for his friend." But what is this love compared or measured by that which impels the Son of God to die for the immortal souls of the children of men? Such human love pales away and is nothing compared to the love of the Creator for His creatures for whom He spontaneously dies.

No symbols of love recorded in human history or exhibited by rational or irrational creatures can ever proclaim for us the love of Jesus

Christ on the Cross: thus making Himself an everlasting sacrifice to the eternal Father for the deathless souls of men: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as the hen doth her brood, but thou wouldst not: behold, the day shall come when thy city shall be left to thee desolate, and a stone shall not be left upon a stone;" and when the ungrateful objects of His bounty will call upon the hills to hide them; and the mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the face of an angry God.

The Sacred Heart is the symbol of the Savior's love; He is truly the prince dying for His subjects. Nothing can proclaim the height and depth of His consuming and unquenchable love; not pity or sympathy or benevolence, but true and positive love.

If He clothes the lilies of the field with a raiment more glorious than that of Solomon, what will He not do, or rather, what has He not done for you, ye children of men.

"Oh, all you that pass by, attend and see if there is sorrow like unto my sorrow for the sins and souls of men."

The remission of all sins flows from the Passion of Christ; and accordingly, all the sacra-

ments have received their virtue from that Passion. There is no entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven without this belief of human redemption through Jesus Christ, our Lord. This is the source and foundation of the whole Christian religion: "To know Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified."

He, by His passion, delivered us from sin: "He had loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood."—St. John.

More glory hath redounded to God by the death and sacrifice of Christ than was the contumely offered to God by the sins of men.

He hath rescued us from the tyranny of the devil: Now is the judgment of this world, now is the Prince of this world cast out. "If I be lifted up I will draw all things to Myself." And He hath drawn all things to Himself either unto salvation or damnation; those whom He hath not saved, because they would not, He hath condemned: mercy or justice were the alternatives which He offered to men. He hath discharged the punishment due to our sins, reconciled us to the Father, propitiating His justice. He hath opened Heaven unto all that will enter, by taking away and destroying all sin. All these benefits come to us from the

passion of Christ, because of the satisfaction, full and complete, not only equaling and quitting, but exceeding our debt.

Hymn

O ye who seek the Lord,
Lift up your eyes on high,
For there He doth the Sign accord
Of His bright majesty.

We see a dazzling light
That shall outlive all time
Older than depth or starry height,
Limitless and sublime.

'Tis He for Israel's fold
And heathen tribes decreed
The king to Abraham pledged of old
And his unfailing seed.

Prophets foretold His birth,
And witnessed when He came,
The Father speaks to all the earth
To hear, and own His name.

To Jesus, Who displays
To babes His beaming face,
Be, with the Father endless praise,
And with the Spirit grace. Amen.

Light of the anxious heart,
Jesus, Thou dost appear,
To bid the gloom of guilt depart
And shed Thy sweetness here.

Joyous is He, with whom,
God's Word, Thou dost abide
Sweet Light of our eternal home
To fleshly sense denied.

Brightness of God above!
Unfathomable grace!
Thy Presence be a fount of love
Within Thy chosen place.

To Thee, whom children see,
The Father, ever blest,
The Holy Spirit, One and Three,
Be endless praise addresst. Amen.

—*Newman.*

"And I believe in Jesus Christ."

This is our faith and its profession; this must be the animating principle of our life and hope. Without this faith it will be impossible for us to be saved. With this faith and its living influence upon our characters and lives we may with confidence rely upon Jesus Christ, its Author and Founder, for its consummation here below and its realization in the kingdom to come. For whosoever will confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him and he in God. It is not from human discernment, it is not flesh and blood have revealed it to thee, but My Father Who is in heaven, were the words of Christ proclaiming the head of the apostles blessed for the confession of this truth: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona, for flesh and blood have not revealed to thee but My Father who is in heaven." This sublime truth is the indestructible basis of our faith and the salient fact of our redemption. The magnitude of the inestimable blessings thus conferred must be measured by adverting to the ruin and seeking to comprehend the in-

expressible misery and universal curse from which mankind was delivered.

"The Angel said unto them: fear not, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people; for this day is born to you in the city of David, a Saviour, Who is Christ, the Lord."—Luke XI.

To-day the Son of God is born—born of wedded maid and Virgin Mother. To-day the power of the evil one is broken; the sway of paganism is shattered and will, with the growth of the Gospel and the light of Jesus Christ, be extinguished; the original curse of the race is blotted out; the doom of mankind is reversed; hell is closed; heaven is re-opened; the race lost in Adam is rescued from damnation and reborn in the spiritual loins of Christ, the second Adam, and destined Saviour of men. We are all rescued from the thraldom of sin; the true worship and glory of God is restored. The Creator is no longer worshipped as a lie. The truth is rendered to the incorruptible God. The knowledge of the true God and His worship is restored. To-day redemption is rained upon us by the infant God, Who descends upon and assumes our nature, which He stoops to elevate and redeem, and reclaim from the bondage of sin and Satan. This has been pre-

announced from the beginning, and uttered by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets down to John the Baptist.

For Christ hath wrought perpetual peace for us with God; the peace which since the fall men had sought, and sought in vain, because through sin impotent in itself, it had been lost. Immortal blessings have been showered upon the race. Yet, it is conspicuously in the manner of our redemption that divine goodness shines with unutterable splendor and magnificence. It is the ineffable majesty of the Godhead coming to redeem us and the copiousness of His love for us men and our salvation, that constitutes our unfailing and abiding and eternal salvation.

Jesus Christ was not conceived as other men, but transcending nature, He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and by His power was born man of the Virgin Mary; so that remaining God, as He had always been, He became man. "Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was made Man." In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh." The Word is the Second Person of the Adorable Trinity; the hypostatic union preserved the actions and

properties of both natures; so that Christ in His conception was perfect God and perfect Man.

That glorious form, the majesty of the Deity, the Word and Wisdom of the Father, He Who sitteth at the right hand of the Father in glory everlasting, the substance and splendor of the Father, that light inaccessible and blinding in its glory. His eternal majesty and throne on high above angels and principalities and powers, on the right hand of the eternal God He laid aside to accomplish what would increase indefinitely His Father's glory and power by rescuing the immortal souls of legions of the sons of men; He forsook the glory of His celestial court, assumed our humanity and entered the prison house of our mortality. Should not we, confined in this valley of tears, and longing to know our destiny and the accomplishment of our hopes, and to learn the truth which our souls crave, should we not by prayer or sentiment with undying burning gratitude welcome Him with fond embrace to His human tabernacle, while all the myriad of angels contemplate in silent adoration the mystery which even angels dare not behold—the mystery of God made man for man's salvation; and to undo the evil of sin and

rebellion against the Most High. Bring ye forth your gold and frankincense and myrrh, that you may make worship to Him as your King and God with loving faith and loyalty. Join your voice with the angels and choirs in the heavenly concert with which Mary greeted the divine Infant in melody that never before nor since was heard since the Sons of God went forth to balance the heavenly spheres in the palm of the Creator's hand and to hold all heaven and earth in harmonious concert upon their deep and strong foundations. Such mellow sounds should not linger long on earth, but hasten to return where such symphony belongs. Join ye, therefore, in that canticle of praise, thanks, benediction, adoration, glory which they render to the Lord God the heavenly King, the Omnipotent God, the only begotten Son, the Immaculate Lamb, the Son of the Father Who comes down from heaven to-day, to show mercy to us, to take away our sins and receive our prayers. Who sits at the right hand of God: for He alone is holy, He alone is Lord, He alone is most high. Who with the Holy Ghost is the glory of God. Thus was the tuneful melody, and nine-fold harmonies let down from heaven to greet the divine In-

fant. Have ye no word, or sigh, or sentiment, or prayer for heaven's new born heir?

It was in the dead of winter, on a cold and dreary night that the earth covered with snow to hide its foul enormity and rank disorders received its God in childhood's shape. The shelter of a stable, the manger supplied a crib; the breath of an ox and ass breathed comfort to the Child. For the sun had darkened its light and dimmed his glory, as at a later day he was eclipsed at the Crucifixion not to behold his Creator die. The Child was poorly wrapped, according to the means of His Virgin Mother who was stripped of this world's goods and comforts. The earth whose fullness was His was stript of its verdure at that season, because the globe was not warmed by its vitalizing heat, as if the sun, paralyzed by the presence of its God in the form of a little child, forgot its function and power. The sun of justice would far outstrip the glorious orbs of sun and earth, and other planets circling round.

It was a time of profound peace throughout the world when the Prince of Peace was ushered among men. The temple of Janus, which was always open in time of war, was

then closed for the first time in the seven hundred and fifty-three years of Roman history. The arms of war, chariots, shields and swords and spears and all the bloody munitions of war were unstained with blood. Profound conviction had seized the minds of men that the Redeemer long expected was near at hand. No armed multitudes hearkened to the hoarse war trumpet, which summoned men to battle. The stars in heaven with steadfast gaze in their revolving orbs sought the new born Child. And one of these pursued the heavenly chase till, finding Him, stood perpendicularly above Him and showed the wise men from the East that in Bethlehem He was born. But, alas! the bloody mandate of Herod that all should be slaughtered of two years and under disturbed the peace with which the Prince of Peace had begun His reign on earth. For indeed, He had not come to shed peace, but war among the children of men, by reason of the struggle that must necessarily be expected between good and evil, between the Prince of Heaven and the princes of this world, because of the essential variance and undying conflict of the kingdom of Christ and the dominion of Satan. Universal peace cannot exist with universal sin and crime.

Behold the Incarnate Word in human form, aye, in the form of a little child swathed in lowly apparel, and resting in a manger out of which the animals had eaten, in lieu of a cradle because there was no room for them in the inn whither had crowded the people from all parts to be enrolled, according to the mandate of Herod, bent on enrolling his subjects. Behold the simple shepherds keeping the night watches over their flocks. They little thought that the Lord was lovingly come to live with them. Such thoughts were far removed from those of their sheep, and their profane desires. When, of a sudden, heavenly music filled their ears and touched their hearts with rapture such as they had never heard before, and raised their spirits to the joys above which the angels sang. Such cadences long dwelt upon their ears and but slowly melted away. What a contrast to the silly songs with which belated travellers or watching shepherds were wont to while away their lonesome hours. The world, loath to lose such cadences, still retains them as far as human utterances can, in the ten thousand and more convent chapels, and glorious choirs throughout the breadth and length of Christendom. But, alas, how meagre and soulless to the divine echoes of that Christ-

mas night. Only when the mind is expanded by the genius of the spot can such reverberations still at times be heard.

Behold, the wise men hasten along the eastern road, mounted on dromedaries or in caravans after two years' journey, to present their offerings to the new born Babe, with their adoration and love and faith and charity; and having fulfilled their mission return by a new road, contrary to the orders put upon them by Herod, who sought to murder the Child. Thus Herod was confounded.

Consider the destitution of that Birth, and the abjectness and poverty of Its circumstances; for the Son of God to be born of a woman into His world and among His own: the Son of David, according to the flesh, the Son of the Everlasting God, according to the Deity! Why all this contrast between His manner of birth, and our poor human conception of how He should have been born!

Was Christ deceived, or is man deceived as to the needs of the comforts and things of this life? If so, in what light does the birth of Christ put all that men seek during life, and, for the most part, even unto death?

Hymn

Jesus, the Ransomer of man,
Who, ere created light began,
Didst from the Sovereign Father spring
His power and glory equalling.

Thou brightness of Thy Father's rays
Thou hope and end of all our ways
With gracious ears the prayers attend,
Which round the world to Thee ascend.

Remember, Lord, that heretofore
When Thee Thy Virgin Mother bore
Thou from her womb didst breathe our air,
And human nature for us bear.

To Thee this present solemn day
We yearly adorations pay;
The world's Redeemer Thee we own
Descending from Thy Father's throne.

The joyful heavens, earth and main
With whatsoever they contain
In new, harmonious accents sing,
New life restored by the new-born King.

We, ransomed by that bloody tide
That issued from Thy sacred side
With double hymns of heart and voice
For this Thy natal day rejoice.

To Jesus, from a virgin sprung,
Be glory given and praises sung:
The like to God the Father be,
And Holy Ghost eternally. Amen.

From where the sunrise had its birth,
Unto the farthest bounds of earth
The Virgin Mary's Child we sing,
With notes of gladness, Christ the King.

Blest Maker of the world, He came
And clad Him in a servant's frame,
Our flesh with His Own flesh to aid
Lest those should perish whom He made.

His mother pure becomes the place
Wherein abides celestial grace,
She bears within her maiden breast
A secret by herself unguessed.

Soon rises in that modest shrine
The Temple of the Lord divine;
The stainless and unwedded one,
Within her womb conceived the Son.

Him in that wondrous birth she bore
Whom Gabriel announced before;
Whom John, while yet unborn, perceived
And, leaping in the womb, believed.

O, Lord, from spotless Virgin sprung,
All glory unto Thee be sung,
To Father and to Spirit be
Like honor paid eternally. Amen.

Whenever we look even casually, or obviously, and still more whenever with studious attention we go beyond the mere phenomena and penetrate into nature—whether on lofty mountain or lowly valley, in crowded city, or barren desert, in the wild wood or in the abandoned haunts of men, in the graveyards that strew the earth as those cities of the dead where men seek their last resting place more living with memories than most crowded habitations; more living, I may say, than any other congregation of beings in this vast sepulchre of the earth—given up to the dead and dying and those about to die—or if fortified with microscope, or if supplied with microscope, or if supplied with scientific mind and ready intelligence more powerful than even microscope, we delve into the earth to whatever depth we can sink; if we plunge into the ocean, stopping at its upper currents and gradually sinking lower and lower through the sea and leaving behind us the great layers of waters, which encountered and analyzed, we sink still into

depths profound until we reach the bottom five or six miles which plummet never sounded except in wonderful cases; or, if returning aloft we soar into the higher atmosphere where with difficulty men can breathe the living air—no matter how high, or medium, or low, in the earth, or in the deepest profundity of the two-thirds water that deluges that amount of the globe, or the illimitable atmosphere which separates the waters above the heavens from water below; wherever, I say, the human mind can ken even without experimentally reaching those objects which, buried in the solid and apparently impervious rock whose secrets are ten thousand times greater than the human eye, which can be only reached, and then imperfectly—everywhere, all God's works are filled with and inhabited by life; so far are we carried with the transporting thought that we would fain imagine that the whole world is made up of life or spiritual existence or existences. The admonition is forced upon us which God made us in the garden: Of all things thou shalt partake save of the tree of life; that was to be preserved from the profane and sacrilegious hand: that was too sacred except by the Creator's creative touch. For in whatever day thou shalt desecrate this life-giving fruit

thou shalt surely die. Increase and multiply and fill the earth. For the propagation of all things else the Creator has provided.

But God's rational creatures must no less be provided and protected and conserved and propagated. Hence, from the beginning He made them man and woman. The woman is drawn from the side of the man, thus showing how the creatures depend absolutely not upon one another, but both absolutely upon the Creator.

While the body comes from the earth to which it will one day return, yet the soul is the divine emanation from the power of God. To all else He imparts the vitality which is to preserve and propagate all species, but for man He supplies almost all but incomprehensible means which will ensure the species forever more. To inanimate nature He need not but bestow the instinct which will lead the power into act, but to man, He, not content with this instinct, imparts the command "Increase and multiply and fill the earth." This is the sovereign and life-giving command: This is the withering and blasting condemnation of race suicide and the quenching and regulating of the birth rate which with death, mortal sin and

the devil as its prompter has introduced into the world.

This is the law of God: who has the right to violate or in the least to control it? He has written that law into the nature of men. He has established that ordinance for the diffusion of the human race. Who dare impugn that emanation from God, and say that it must not be, that the divine ordinance must yield to human convenience, and is only to be heeded so far as to gratify a human purpose or quench human lust; who is to declare that the paramount end of marriage must be contemned and that the accompanying conception must become the main or even the sole issue? God alone must be the interpreter of His own law. That law must be obeyed and acted upon in full and obvious sense. Not until God Himself and He alone otherwise ordains.

Tell me you subverter of the birth rate, and you verbal enemy and abuser of your fellowman, have you ever heard of Onan? Do you imagine that this vice for which that gentleman was struck dead is exterminated or extenuated or becomes a virtue because clothed in the mantle of marriage, or hidden in the secrecy of conjugal masturbation?

What is the difference between life destroyed after it is given or life destroyed in the seed or before it is given?

People sometimes say that they are afraid of the responsibility of bringing many children into the world. But are you not afraid of the responsibility of not bringing them into life, when you have the power and have assumed the responsibility? If you dread the responsibility of having children, still more should you dread the prospect of frustrating the end for which you married. How great the responsibility of blank existence when you go before God. By child-bearing you shall be saved, said St. Paul; without child-bearing in contravention of the sacrament you will be cursed. If the responsibility seems so great, why did you enter the married state? Tremble more at the latter than at the former. But however great may have been your blind error in entering, you are now in that state, and in it you must remain, or, if even now you cannot bring yourself to bear the burden of maternity there is still some relief; abstain from the abuse of the ordinance, and act as if you were never married; live in marriage as you would if you had never entered. Be chaste, as if you had never lost your chastity. You cannot serve

God and the devil, says the Holy Scripture. You cannot glorify God and yet pollute the Sacrament by not having children; you cannot glorify the Creator by bestial gratification and unutterable outrage against His holy ordinance, and yet reproach Him.

There is no responsibility like that of decreeing that young lives shall not be quenched.

Wonderful how you tremble at the responsibility of doing that which you know you are bound to do.

How consolatory to begin eight or ten or more destinies to people heaven; how miserable to be deprived of the glorious opportunity and divine privilege of giving birth to so many creatures endowed with immortal souls to be sharers of eternity and everlasting bliss. How fearful the consciousness of having lost and even deliberately destroyed these glorious and immortal destinies. Before the tribunal of God the social tribunals will be made a sorry wreck; they will be condemned as sinning against the light of the Holy Ghost. Murdering a possibility of a human being, whether in anticipation or actually, whether in its causes before conception, or after; whether for one day or twenty years is still murder.

We hear of some who deny the existence of

God; but who denies the existence of nature? And nature is imprinted in the mind and consciousness of every human being. Why not live up to the profession that you make? Would you profess chastity, and yet live as if married? If married, why contemn and abuse the purpose of marriage? Every man and woman is bound to live according to their obligations.

Before you enter religion, you should reflect upon the step. Before you enter marriage, you should consider what it imports, the obligations which it carries with it. You are not bound to one or the other; but either entered, you must live up to the duties which belong to it. Religion you may forsake and yet conform to the law of God: Marriage cannot be cast aside or its duties trampled under foot, as such conduct would do wrong to yourself, and God, and the solemn purposes for which marriage has been instituted. Among these are the procreation of offspring, its nurture and education, and the undivided bliss that belongs to the married parties.

The gratification of concupiscence is but incidental and can never be satisfied for itself alone. There must be chastity and moderation even in the state of marriage. Bestial

gratification may be the lot of the ox and the cow and other animals, but never the object of rational beings.

Ignorance of the end of marriage thus based on morality, is the cause of the clamor of those who would hinder procreation of children and their efforts to curtail to mercenary standard.

If you fear that bearing of children will be too much for you why assume the state whose object is to bear children? Why enter marriage, or if entered, why not abstain as if you had not married? The denial would be too great for you? What! Do you want to abuse the ordinance which an all wise providence has set up to sink it into a means of bestial gratification? For what purpose could such an abnormity serve beyond that which I have intimated? Such a state would sink men to a condition lower than even the beast. For the beast does but act according to his nature, while human beings, thus sinking their rank in the scale of being, and below that of irrational beings, contemn the light of reason and the dictates of conscience, and cease to be guided by that sovereign intelligence which should be their monitor and paramount end. Such horrible abuse is but a mere cloak that ill disguises, but rather exposes, the headlong proclivity to

beastly nature and the basest selfishness, tantamount to even the murder of the young who crave entrance into the paradise of life—who clamor incessantly to enter into life. Truly not even all that say Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but woe betide those who by prevention, or destruction, or any other way; who choked by selfishness would deprive any human being of that which they themselves sought and obtained.

The great foundation upon which the race-controllers and the reducers of the human family would base their contention is that large families, as they measure, are the hindrances that such persons experience in raising and clothing and educating their children and in hoarding riches for those who will come after them; the instinct of avarice which they employ in building up a fortune to protect their children from indigence, and to secure prosperity for all time, if possible, for them and their descendants, that may exempt them from labor or any inconvenience that they would deem unseemly or unfavorable to the improved or high state which they may have already acquired or to which they look forward as their great object in life. They would shun poverty, or indigence or humble circumstances; they

would, if possible, roll in luxury and be superior to or far ahead of the rest of men.

Why then did they enter this state which proves so great, so insurmountable, an obstacle to their pride and ambition? Why did they willingly accept so great, so perilous a condition?

But you may say that not so much for the family or yourselves did you undertake this responsibility, but chiefly not for self, as you would fain persuade yourself, but that by lessening the offspring, you may be enabled to give them a more promising chance in life. Therefore the whole family or its possibility is to be destroyed to secure the necessary means or even affluence for two or three, or as few as you may deem will be conducive to this most contemptible purpose.

The family is to be slaughtered or rendered impossible in order that a few may survive. Is it the survival of the fittest that you are studying? Why, no, because you destroy all, or the majority of the family, and render them nonentities that you may cherish the few, although among those whom you destroy may perish the most gifted and upon whom God may have poured His best gifts. You would nurse the few in your bosom, but the rest you would cast

out and allow them to people the porches of the temples as of old; or else you would deprive them of a mere chance of entering the kingdom of God by making their existence an impossibility.

If reverses overtake you and misery waylays your path, are you to murder the remainder, either by murdering the unborn, or murdering in anticipation, or by any other means that can preclude the possibility of a human being or turn it away from eternity. There are those who tell us the world cannot supply the necessary food if children are procreated in too great number or multitude; that there will be scarcity in the substance itself or at least the impossibility of procuring it when required for such an exigent emergency as prolific parentage. Perish the false and base doctrine thus enunciated by Malthus—the enemy of mankind. The Almighty would never have uttered the command to increase and multiply if He foresaw (and what is there that He does not foresee) any truth in this insufficiency of the fruitfulness of the earth to provide for the children drawn from its bosom, and to which they must return at once our mother, our nurse, our sepulchre. Perish the false doctrine that the God of nature originated the whole human

offspring and cannot feed them who must needs die of starvation; teeming abundance in its origin, withering starvation awaiting them come to life. No, God never made a human mouth without at the same time providing plentiful food to fill it, and give all that may be necessary for its conservation. He cannot be a father to those rolling in affluence and a godfather to those who through any fault of His would perish. He could never summon human existences from nothing into life, and then allow them to be starved back to the cold and dreary solitude of nothing from which His providence had called them. Human rapacity could do this, much the same as the rapacity and selfishness which for sake of lust abuses either before or during or subsequent to the ministration of the ordinance which He has constituted and consecrated for the creation and propagation of the human race.

Give the child a chance for life and God will furnish and provide means for its sustenance. He will make up for all that your lust denies it by depriving it of life or precluding it therefrom.

The foulest folly of the heart is to claim to do a service to childhood and at the same time to seek to destroy or diminish human life. The

darkest spot on human intelligence is to claim that you are serving childhood with a more generous hand than God, its Creator, proclaiming increase and multiply: and suffer little children to come unto Me for of such is the kingdom of God. Better a thousand times that weighted with a millstone you be cast into the sea than that even one of these possible little ones should be precluded from Christ, or that the child clamoring for admission to His presence should have the gates of life slammed in his face and be ordered to return to the darkness from which, with Christ's passport, he would ascend to heaven to His Creator and beneficent Father.

To say that you kill to save, that you murder or deny life to six or more to possess two or three is the grossest absurdity conceivable. You destroy half a dozen and save two or three. But sickness or some other cause carries away the two or three and you are left childless, as barren as if a child was never given you. How dreadful must be the loneliness of your condition for the time that may run before you go down to the grave uncomforted and unattended.

I cannot understand, nor can you, the economy of destroying life to save life; for mur-

dering life for the sake of giving life; of killing or preventing many for sake of comfort to yourself or affluence to a few. Would you make away with five or six or more that you may cherish with a mother's love or a father's fostering care one or two or three?

Remarkable conclusions should follow the logic of destroying life for sake of life, of the murderers assuming the office of paternity, of the creature usurping the place of God.

The right of the child to life, to the life conferred upon it by the Creator, disposes of and crushes forever all the objections which are alleged against the birth rate of the human offspring. The parent's pretended right to destroy or diminish his offspring, the fruit of the mother's womb, cannot stand against the sacred right and eternal proprietorship of the child presenting itself for life, fee simple title provided, vouchsafed by God the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all. For is not the earth and the fulness thereof the Lord's; but He is the Lord and giver of life; the Creator of bodies and souls and the Sanctifier of all which He has washed clean in His blood and redeemed by His life and death on the cross.

No physical or economic consideration of human welfare can overcome: Thou shalt not

do evil that good may come. No act on the part of parents, no exercise of marriage rights can militate against the right of the unborn—can contravene the universal law and supreme ordinance set up by God the Creator and blessed by the grace of His sacrament.

The natural law, and the natural law alone must regulate the birth control; and this, the said natural law, can never be brought to lessen, or limit, or destroy this sacrament of nature—this prolific source of all the good which an All-wise God has poured upon the race of men for temporal and eternal welfare and bliss and glory.

The great English poet begins his immortal poem upon the fact which is the basis of religion that "sin brought death into the world with all our woe with loss of Eden till one greater man restored us." And as this is absolutely true with regard to the fall of man, it is no less true that it was the sin of race control that has introduced and continues to introduce the worst fall of our race involved in the crime of child murder, whether it be by prevention or destruction before conception, or after conception, or before birth or after birth, whether of the child whose existence is but of one day, or one hour in the womb or on the

earth, wherever it has met life or light or the dawn of existence.

This species of murder is rampant everywhere and continues to depopulate the world and call down the anger of God. "With desolation is the land made desolate because there is no one who thinketh in his heart," or because there are so many who if they think in their hearts of the crime of infanticide, they fail to obey their better thoughts and the dictates of their conscience by infusing their conviction of duty into their manner of life which leads to the growth of society and the procreation of human beings. Sin indeed brought death into the world, but this manner of sin aims to destroy the race of mankind and womankind.

"When, and what art thou, execrable shape, that darest, though grim and terrible, advance, thy misguided front athwart my way," said Milton ("Paradise Lost,") to sin. And the same may be addressed to the birth control advocates thus prefigured.

However, this fall of man which Milton describes, founded upon divine revelation, concerns man's spiritual fall from the supernatural plane to which he had been raised and by it made heir of a destiny that did not belong to him and to which he had no rightful claim,

which was made his by the gratuitous goodness of God that he might, having passed a time here below, be united to his Creator in bliss and glory evermore. This was the loss of the original integrity and supernatural grace which he lost by his estrangement from God, and the consequent loss of His inheritance. Does the inherent right and unalienable duty cease because the child, tongueless, cannot utter its protest, or run away from the blows meant to wound it unto death? What child would willingly lose its life to gratify the whim or wanton caprice of the hardened parent? If the child could see the dagger drawn upon him with the edge turned towards him, could he believe it was but a dagger of the mind or a false creation? If capable of consciousness, it might indeed persuade itself that it was only such; for it could never imagine the author of his existence capable of destroying with one fell swoop the fruit of the divine ordinance which has nursed it into being. The whole matter resolves itself into the simple question: has the child the right, that God-given right, to life? If so, the parent or other has no right to deprive it of this sacred right. We hold these "things to be self-evident," says Tom Jefferson, "That all men are created equal;

that they are endowed inalienably with life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." What say you to this, ye calumniators of the truth? The pursuit of happiness springs from liberty, and liberty and all happiness must proceed from life; indeed, they are impossible without it. The principle of life is inherent in the very foetus of the child; it is meant to be conserved and fostered and perpetuated into eternity; it must blossom into an endless fruition. Death introduced into the world seeks to clutch at it, and choke it, and destroy it, before it is born; or, it may be before it is conceived. "Who has done this?" asked the farmer—"who has mixed the corn and the cockle?" "An enemy has done this," answers his companion. And thereby the advocate of birth control is the enemy or arch fiend in hostile array.

But besides the tremendous descent that forever shattered his nature, forfeited grace and forever imperilled his salvation and closed the gates of life "till one greater man would restore him," and by His redemptive blood bring back to his lost inheritance. It is this loss and deprivation that chiefly constitutes and from it springs original sin.

On his fall man did not relapse into a state of pure nature; such a state had never actually

existed, but was purely ideal, or, what could have been if God had so ordained. Whether in the supernatural state in which he was born, or even in the state of pure nature which could have been actualized, or in the fallen state in which he is now born, subject to sin and misery, with heavenly aspiration, it must be felt, or with downward proclivities; we, alas, feel but too well. Man would have propagated his species and filled the earth according to the mandate "increase and multiply" which he had received from his Creator. By the sweat of his brow he would have earned his living and by child-bearing he would have atoned for his sins, sanctified his soul and saved his immortal life, as the apostle says to Timothy.

Yet in time he was overtaken by another disaster which sin brought on him and was overwhelmed in the deluge. For all flesh had corrupted its way and it repented God that He had made man. Other calamities came thick and fast upon him. The prodigality of lust was so boundless and fearful that it sought to overflow the barriers of nature and flowed into new and until then unheard-of iniquities; man and woman sinning against the laws of nature as St. Paul fearfully portrays.

While nature left to itself would have dif-

fused and supported the child of man, yet the perversity of human passion, for various causes, would distort the God-given ordinance meant for its propagation and abuse it for the gratification of the flesh without regard to and even in spite of the divine command. Again and again did the Creator show his indignation; now by the earth swallowing 27,000 fornicators; now its opening and sinking for the sins against nature; now by striking dead Onan for casting the seed of nature. So great and universal had become the contempt and disregard of the divine law forbidding vices of fearful kinds, all but universal in extent and atrocious in guilt that the flood gates of heaven, and the waters of the earth, broke their bounds and the firmament no longer separated the waters that were above from the waters that were below. For forty days the earth was purged of its iniquities, and the race of men were allowed to renovate their species in the cradle of the Ark, moving over the water and preserving the few from which the children of men came forth to again repeople the earth.

There can be little doubt that the same providence which followed the race from the start still attends it. The vicissitudes of na-

tions, the experiences of individuals, the hunger, poverty and nakedness, the plagues, the moral obligations, the physical pains, the disappointments of life, the success of evil, the trials of virtue, the frustration of hopes, the dissimulation of vice, simulated virtue, all that fills the lives of men and the records of nations and all other calamities which we cannot enumerate, are the just punishments of sin and the distributive allotments of justice and temporal punishment here in this life to draw the balance between an all-wise and omnipotent God, and the black perversity and devious pursuits and paths of wayward sinful man.

Thus God justifies His providence and manifests His wise ordering in all things for the benefit of man and the glory of His Own sovereign goodness.

The child's right to life is as sacred and as inviolable; and it clings to it as its very own. This right begins at the instant of conception, and binds at any period, whether months or weeks or hours before birth, or even from conception as at any other time subsequent to its birth. I have read that in the Roman law the father claimed the right to the life of his son. The Chinese claim the right to curtail the number of their girls. But these are but

pseudo-pretensions which the natural law would never sanction. Even though this were universal, the universality would not legitimate the crime or even extenuate that which the rest of men condemn and execrate. Tarquin put to death his own son; and yet although the son had been guilty of murder, Tarquin's name has come down to us in history as something execrable and repugnant to the feelings of human nature. Who could slaughter his own son? The advocate of the birth rate could assuredly, is the reply, not given but meant.

The mother or father who would plunge the dagger into the heart of his child; the child being thirty, or twenty, or ten years, or ten months, or ten weeks, or ten hours in existence; is he guilty of murder? Is murder to be reckoned upon the length of life which the murdered has passed? Can this at all mitigate the crime and make not that to be murder which is as clearly such as that Cain killed Abel, or as that the numberless ones hanged or electrocuted every day are murderers. Does the unconsciousness of the child save it from being murder? If so, all that needs to escape the guilt of murder would be to take life when the victim is unconscious or unaware, as shooting him from behind a hedge, or when he is asleep, as

happened when the girl in Italian history drove a nail into her father's brain, or as when Judith cut off the head of the tyrant Holofernes when sunk in intoxication.

It is somewhere said that we priests, or the Church which we serve, are entirely too narrow or restricted on this subject; that a more enlarged view must characterize up-to-date theology or dogmatics on the subject; that the teachings of monks and religious should in times long since gone by have yielded to the exigent demands of the society which has outgrown these leading strings of an unenlightened or ignorant age. But here is your fatal error, your irretrievable error.

This teaching is absolutely free from any religion, Protestant or Catholic, pagan or Mormon; all religions or no religion. It is entirely superior to any moral consideration except that which comes from nature.

The natural law is inexorable in itself and is binding upon every one. And this is the impregnable and unassailable rock upon which alone this matter can be discussed.

If such obligation can be viewed at all as independent of the natural law, taught to us by conscience and proclaimed to us by the voice of God; increase and multiply and fill

the earth. Suffer these little ones to come to Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven; better to be cast into the sea than to scandalize or block the way to heaven for these little and innumerable children flocking to be received in the arms of their Father and Eternal Friend. There is no use of hedging the issue and darkening the question by invoking this or that reason of economy or self, or otherwise, or any pretext to silence conscience, or confute those who stand up for the natural law written in our hearts, speaking its condemnation in thunder tones to men; and of the murderous invasion of childhood, that form of human life, which the God Whom we adore stooped to sanctify and whom of all creatures He invited to come unto Him.

If by His benign providence all things have been created and conserved, propagated and even augmented to greater production, why should not the same tribute to His fatherly providence be paid by man through his generative powers? What a contravention of His laws would it be if vegetable or animal nature should arise and cross swords with His omnipotence and even refuse to be the means by which all His works would last and perpetuate themselves to the end. If the birds in the air, if

the fish in the sea, if the monsters in the deep, if the animals that roam in the forest, if the thunderbolts that purify the atmosphere, if the lightning should refuse to flash its light and give darkness instead—if, in a word, there should be a rebellion of the elements against the sovereign will of providence? What would result to men and the world? The same argument may be continued indefinitely, and with the same force. This being the truth, who is the parent—father or mother—who will not follow implicitly and instinctively that which is duty so loudly and unmistakably laid down in all nature, physical and moral? Who is the generator born to generate who will arise and say, "I will not serve"; "I will improve the works of God"; "I cannot follow the laws of God because God has not supplied me with the abundance necessary to carry out His promise?" "I must have fewer children that some may live?" Why not go farther and say that "I will have none at all sooner than have many or any?" Why then have any at all? Why not restrain yourself altogether? But passion will have it so, you answer. Is it then because of passion you have children?

You have the same right to have none as you have to have but a few. And you have no right

to have but a few. If you do not desire to have all that God sends, why did you marry? Ah! there is the rub; that is what puzzles those who would have but a few, and yet are not content to practice entire continence. It is beastly lust after all that lies at the porch of eternal life and declares a let and hindrance upon all who would enter there. We may well apply the words of Dante: "Let all who enter here into this maelstrom of iniquity where so many have perished"; "into this Serbonian bog where armies whole have sunk"; into this abyss of iniquity where so many have lost immortal lives and inflicted immortal death and shut out from eternal bliss those who but for them would have been sharers of unending life; where so many themselves have perished from the book of life; where so many have been damned because of this very perversity that we are treating; it is into this frightful vortex of lust to which a great part of the race has fallen victims, and have been deprived of all that existence and life could have bestowed upon them and their posterity that would have issued from the loins of these possible beings; it is this which swallowed up Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain and sent them to their merited oblivion in the waters

of the Dead Sea; it is this that has dispeopled other cities and nations in all parts of the earth throughout the long record of ages; it is this more than anything else that has alienated men from God and cast a deep cloud upon the careers of men and the destiny of the human race; in all this, the plague spot that has, in a manner, renovated original sin and absolutely perpetuated actual sin with the other moral ills and physical diseases that have followed in its trail. Providence visiting upon posterity the sins of the progenitors. For if the justice of God permitted original sin to flow on upon the children of men, who can complain of this same providence allowing all the ills that attend the abuse of the ordinance established for the continuation of life, thus changing the glory of God into wickedness and introducing into the world the fearful state so graphically depicted by the Apostle: "Man with man," etc., St. Paul and Romans.

This sin brings back upon men the crimes which flourished among the pagan philosophers which darkened their intelligence and prostrated their unsurpassed genius, which sunk them into ignorance of their primal and instinctive duties to God and man. Unbridled lust, or contempt of the marriage ordinance

and abusing it for mere gratification must inflict an unceasing warfare against nature which, allowed to continue, must engulf society. It is this which undermined the Roman Empire, which disintegrated the nations, which demoralized and corrupted the people, enfeebled their vigorous vitality and military discipline. For when the spirit of manhood is preserved or incorrupted the national life is immutable and indestructible. Then the nation is reflected in the family, one in essence, many in its children, sacred in their destinies and duties and aspirations.

In addition to the fact that from the matrimonial contract arises the essential duty of offspring which is sealed by its sacramental character impressed upon it by Jesus Christ, and that this object is so innate to the nature of matrimony that it were impossible to conceive the sacrament without it; while it might be neglected or an erroneous idea might exist, yet if this fundamental object of marriage should be excluded knowingly and with advertence, the marriage thus contracted or consecrated would be invalid or destitute of binding force. For the union that constitutes marriage can only be for this end, or else it would be a mere orgy for unrestrained gratification.

This last cannot for a moment be entertained. For the ordinance was vouchsafed, as much as any means was bestowed for its own purpose, by God—the Father and Creator. For He Who made man and woman, made them man and woman from the beginning. Wherefore, man shall leave father and mother and cling to his wife; since they shall be two in one flesh. But, not to have children would be an abortion that could only end, if persevered in to great extent, in the extinction of the human race. If such a lamentable effect did not follow it would only be because all men and women could not become blind to the manifest light of reason and the inalienable instincts of human nature.

Having gone as far as we have on the necessity of offspring, and shown that it could never have been meant or designed as a channel of iniquity but a source of benediction; and as a hindrance or barrier to the torrent of immorality that would otherwise deluge the human race, there are other considerations that should not be passed over. And these considerations should have an indeclinable influence upon the happiness of families, and on society and individuals.

Nothing is more natural than that of any family a large number should die, some sooner, some later. This desolation in families will depend upon a variety of causes into which we need not enter, and which cannot be foreseen or prevented. Who could calculate the loss endured in a plague? Who could know the accidents which may overtake—some from unknown causes, some from open and obvious occurrences. The health, the occupations, the places frequented, the studies pursued, the wars, and diseases and deaths and countless other vicissitudes that may at any time or turn of life reduce a large family to a few.

This havoc of children is not confined to a few or exceptional families; it extends to all without discrimination; in some, more in one than in another; in others fewer; but in all some. Considering the number of children that die in infancy or else before birth, it is not so much a wonder that so many die, as it is that so many survive. It seems not to be marvelled at that so many die in infancy. People soon forget the loss and console themselves with the presence of the survivors and the comfort that they afford in the home. In a very large family, the dead are scarcely

missed and are soon forgotten. But when the family is already but few, the pain of the loss is indeed poignant and soul reaching.

Now, then, if the family are but few, and never had but few, and especially if it becomes childless, how sad is the loss to father and mother, and their state of destitution deprived of consolation and solace which the offspring alone can afford to the parents. What is then to enable them to pass the remaining years of life and to go down its decline in the valley of death? Father and mother are deprived of their rightful protectors and supporters. How bitter in such hours will be the sorrow of the parents if they are conscious that their loneliness is all their own fault brought about by their own doing, or by the neglect to raise a family when they could. They are like the shrivelled oaks in the forest struck by lightning and left to decay. They are as the fig trees that have produced no fruit. The good tree brings forth good fruit, but the bad tree brings forth bad fruit; the sterile tree brings forth no fruit at all. As the Lord cursed the fig tree because it yielded no fruit, so does He curse and mark His reprobation upon those families that have abused His sacrament, and not given birth to those little children whom

He wishes to approach unto Him, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Suffer the wheat and the cockle to grow together until harvest time. Then gather one by itself for the kingdom of the elect, and bind also the cockle and let it be cast into the oven. And so it shall be on the day when He will go forth to separate the elect from the reprobate. For many are called, but few are chosen. Opportunity to all is abundantly given, coercion is imposed upon none.

Much more remains to be said on this inexhaustible subject; much on the folly of attempting to restrain or regulate or in any way to interfere with what is clearly the work and ordering of providence. Much also should be added to show that everything should be done to augment the same birth rate. But neither the time is sufficient nor a discourse adequate for so lengthy a task. Nor do I feel myself equal to such an undertaking. My hope is that some one else more capable and more diligent may be led to dwell farther upon this all-important subject, too long neglected out of a false sense of delicacy or fastidiousness lest offense be given. Of course, we know that some things, according to the apostle, are not to be so much as mentioned among Chris-

tians. But this is not one of them. The apostle himself was not slow nor shamefaced enough to condemn the incestuous Corinthian, or burn into his immortal pages his condemnation of the deplorable vices of his day; man with man doing what is unlawful; sex with sex intermingled, abandoning the legitimate use of one another. All this in the Epistle to the Romans; the whole world without God and without hope. Nor does he fail to declare that even yet woman may be saved so as by child bearing. The last I suggest to the new teachers of birth rate to learn what the great Apostle thinks on this subject which should be a pregnant subject to them, if any pregnancy is possible to them.

I am far from thinking that the sins of paganism to which I have referred are here to be found. If I thought so, the countless institutions that are scattered up and down all over the hemisphere for every form of human ailment, and every need of children, and mothers and fathers, and all the ills that flesh is heir to, would arise and point the finger of scorn at such an untruthful statement. I am as far from conceiving it as possible that the murder of Chinese girls is resorted to because of any uselessness that we imagine belongs to

their sex, or because of any osbtacle to their young and fruitful culture of a family, the manifold pursuits which they may follow and in the end attain proficiency and learning and science and all the other purposes to which their lives may fitly be devoted. No, we have none such in this broad and prosperous and richly-endowed land, with its teeming industries and inexhaustible resources, where every hope may expect fulfillment, and every ambition, even the highest, may be gratified.

However, what is the difference between our state and theirs? On the surface we may appear to be vastly superior and comparatively innocent. Yet, if the same vices exist in our country and undermine our civilization as did the vices of paganism, modern and pagan, Roman or Chinese, or any other that we know of, what can be expected but the same demoralization and moral degradation which prevailed among them, and still prevails to the infinite ruin of souls and the triumph of sin and Satan and iniquity. Let every one determine for himself how he stands in this momentous matter and in the supreme hour in the lives of individuals and of our society and country and civilization.

Here I must stop for the time being.

The Increase of the Birth Rate as Against the Limit

To-day and for some time back we have been hearing from certain quarters to a nauseating degree of what is recognized as the birth rate. It is, indeed, a remarkable subject to be spoken of, especially in public assemblies, after so mercenary a manner, and with the affectation of its being proper matter to be canvassed, as if it were a marketable business which every one should calculate so as not to endanger his prosperity or cripple his resources by too reckless a management of this holy ordinance of Matrimony. Indeed the subject is quite too big or too pregnant to be too often introduced into the bosom of the family, if I may thus express myself. One would have thought that such a sacred office would have taken care of itself and would have been regulated by the instincts of nature and the dictates that spring from conscience when applied to a matter of so delicate and surpassing importance. It is not easy to understand how an ordinance essential to marriage, which has been already ac-

cepted with the utmost deliberation and sanctified by the free consent of those interested, and its most solemn and binding obligation, can again be treated as an open and optional agreement. It would have seemed that the sacramental pledge would have absolutely precluded further discourse and settled before God and man and woman their duties in the premises.

But with all its pretended high ideals, this is a mercenary age, and this a profligate country in which there are 1,000 divorces for a million of marriages; or one marriage stands firm and unbroken and indissoluble for one thousand that are treated as if indissoluble only for the time that is required to betake themselves to the land where all such things are as free as the air, and the services of a lawyer readily procurable. Of course, a time, be it long or short, may be decent if not necessary to acquire a passing or momentary domicile.

I have said that natural instinct would lead a husband or wife to the discharge of their marriage obligations. Add to this the knowledge that is implied in entering into the contract of marriage should be more than enough to dictate the same duty. What right have we

to seek as if for an unknown quantity that which the sacrament of matrimony implies? What possible reason is there to discuss or make any doubt of that which is so obvious? The duty stands fixed and irrevocable. Is it not to procreate an offspring? If not this, why enter these most sacred precincts—this sanctuary of the most High? There seem to be those who would interpose an objection. If any such is to be interposed, why wasn't it considered before assuming life-long and life-producing obligations? Your objection once considered is laid aside as untenable once marriage is contracted. You cannot revoke what is inalienable from the sacrament, any more than you can undo or dissolve that which is indissoluble of its nature, and of its sacramental character, and what God has put together cannot be put asunder. You cannot separate the duty of having offspring for the incidental one of gratifying lust. If children are not in prospect, then lust cannot be entertained. For lust is the fuel of sin; it is only the end of producing a family that at all warrants the motions of concupiscence. It is only the union of souls conjoined by love that should seek bodily embrace.

Nature knows what is to be accomplished;

what is to be done; children to be born while the bodily conditions are to be gratified; the powers of conception will cease when the state of the body no longer finds its fertility. Nature cannot be forced. Hence there can be no reason for limiting or restraining what God and nature, or God through nature, has bestowed. On the contrary, everything should be done to nourish and strengthen the bodies that they may be made fecund. Whatever is necessary or useful is legitimate; whatever is hurtful or unnecessary should be shunned.

As the concupiscence for procreation to any extent that God grants it is unassailable, some people would seek reasons to justify their weak contention against such procreation. Well, what are these reasons? Let us sift them, and see what truth or justice of complaint can be found.

Malthus, the promoter of this doctrine, may say that the expense of procreating and educating a large family is greater than it would be if the size of the family were not so great. We answer that it was God Who said increase and multiply and fill the earth. There is no restriction in the divine command. He Who is ready to create immortal souls without limit—a soul for every body conceived—cannot

be wanting in supplying the food and whatever else is required for the conception; the conservation, the education, and clothing of every child whom He sends into the world. In a word, God has never made a human being or a human mouth which He has not nourished and filled up to all the needs and demands of nature's wants.

If the rapacity and selfishness of some are found sometimes to contravene the providence of God, from which some may at times suffer, the fault is to be ascribed not to economy on God's part, for with a lavish hand He extends even overindulgence to all the creatures whom He sends into the world. It is His will that no mouth may be left unfilled. The earth's production may be increased tenfold. He clothes the lilies of the field with a raiment more glorious than that of Solomon, and more abundant and resplendent than man could conceive or long for. His sun shines upon the just and the unjust; the clouds drop the manna of fertility which covers the face of the earth. His generosity is exhaustless. If momentary stint at times seems to occur, it is because the rich, His appointed almoners to the poor, are unmindful of their lofty duty and allow insufficiency in the midst of suffering and even

abundance. The heavenly order proclaimed by Him is disjointed, as it would be now by human interference; with crossing or contravention of the order which He has set up for the procreation and diffusion of the human race. Such must be the result of the little wisdom of men who would usurp the direction of Supernal Power. Verily did He inspire the psalmist with the words: "I have been young, and now I am grown old; yet never have I seen the just man abandoned nor his child crying for bread." Human perversity may distort the benignity of God, but never can it frustrate the divine economy meant to supply food for the children of men, any more than it can the divine ordinance for their conception and birth. Further conservation of men is no less the work of God than their coming into the world.

It is the duty of men to adapt their resources to the demands of nature asking to come into the world; not to adapt in proportion the demands of nature to what men may regard as their sufficiency beyond which they are unwilling to go or advance. If there be a straitness between what is the supply of food and the multitude of those who knock at the portals of life for entrance, it is obviously

the duty of human parents not to curtail those clamoring for life, but by rigid and practicable economy to embrace all that come and trust to His fatherly providence for their nourishment and unfailing support.

It is not the physical demands of the offspring that requires or necessitates the expenditure that hinders the parents from having so many children as physical instinct and love of offspring inspire; it is useless extravagance and desire of pampering to the whims of children; when such whims are held under control and are governed by what may be regarded as reasonable bounds it will be found that even in mediocrity, or even slender resources there is enough for all the offspring that providence may send. But who will supply that which goes beyond their limitations? Their fancy or caprice will make demands beyond all reason. In this case, it is not the child rate which should be curtailed, but extravagance and waste must be brought back to the standard of reason. But never is the diminution of offspring to be any rule or standard for the lessening of expense. For offspring is the main end of marriage, and it would be criminal to encroach upon the sacred precincts

of marriage, out of any desire to diminish expense.

Another consideration is to be carefully weighed before any temerity in this matter of lessening the birth rate. Is it because of expenditure and avarice included that urges parents to small families? Or is it not rather that they would affect to be richer and to live in greater affluence by pretending to greater means than they really possess? Is it not that greater means of luxury may be hoarded that the family, if not positively reduced, at least is kept under very strict limit—sometimes confined to two or three in a length of time long enough to give birth to and educate a numerous progeny? The writer has more than once heard such people, I mean such as don't want children, sneer at God loving, God fearing, and children loving parents from those places where offspring are more indigenous to the land than here, and that out of jealousy or some such motive cast reflection upon them as breeders; or speak of them as if they were horses or cows. While in point of fact they, and they alone, were the real human beings endowed with heavenly instincts and pregnant with rationability—while the others were preg-

nant with nothing. They had carefully guarded against such a possibility, not by abstinence from the conjugal act or the exercise of the matrimonial ordinance, except insofar as the shocking abuse first conceived by Onan who, wasting the seed of nature, was struck dead by the hand of God.

It is not a great while, at least easily computed in years, since the gifted Irish poet Oliver Goldsmith in his "Deserted Village" sung the words that have sunk deep into every remembrance and shall never be forgotten, while the village itself, which evoked the sentiment, or rather truth, expressed in thrilling pathos which shall be among the monuments of the past, taking its place with Gray's Elegy or the Burial of Sir John Moore: "Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey where wealth accumulates and men decay." Wealthy and commercial strife and the increase or multiplication of men stand in bitter array; they cannot survive on friendly terms; they are stubbornly opposed. Thrift or economy regulated by no law but the law of selfishness; seeking nothing but what ministers to self-indulgence, in its nature opposed to self-denial or self-renunciation, can but with reluctance and unyielding obstinacy spare what conjugal

fidelity and the movements of nature would naturally follow. Hence the sacred ordinance of marriage will not stand against them; they must yield to the teachings of commercialism and the rapacity for wealth; the accursed thirst of gold and the hellish greed of gain, or the pursuit of acquisition will always be held in greater degree than the desire of offspring.

But what greater acquisition or what fortune more precious and more enduring than for a man or woman to see themselves in their children—to see themselves reflected or mirrored in children yet unborn but in lineaments yet unknown—as the progenitors of a future posterity of generations? Who would barter his children emerged from possibility into the state of reality grown and developed and matured for any block or Fifth Avenue residence, or any other inheritance? Who would not sacrifice all temporal wealth for his child? Would he hesitate to lay down his life itself for his child or to save it from injury or affront that might threaten with insult or assault or contumely?

This love that we cherish for our child is imprinted in the soul and springs from the union of two souls in the parents which constitutes, it may be truly said, but one person.

For this love, the purest and exalted love is of all passions the most generous, the most disinterested. It is not the union of bodies that creates the love which unites man and wife from which the love of child springs, and which enables us to see ourselves in our children; it is the unity of one soul in two.

We love the child when born and when he becomes our self, our companion, our adviser or guide. Why should we not love the child who is yet but in the state of possibility? What is there so offensive to us that we should close the gates of life upon this immortal intelligence? Should we not rather embrace him and welcome him to our homes to be the companion and playmate of those children already around our hearth? Should we not embrace all those whom God sends to be their guardians and protectors? If God has made the rich to be the almoners of His bounty to the poor, what greater bounty can He entrust to our fostering care than that of making us His ministers in bringing into the world the souls of men in their tabernacle of human bodies for whom He has established among us the ordinance of marriage—by which and through which beings are ushered into existence? As in the vegetable kingdom and in

animal nature He has supplied in abundance the seed and the vitality which imparts to dead matter the vitalizing power of resurrection from season to season, from age to age; thus such beings are renovated from death to life; and thus vitality is conserved and the race of human beings indefinitely augmented and diffused throughout the world.

The treatment of womankind and childhood is an increasing sign of the civilization and religiousness of the people among whom it exists. For the woman or wife is the equal of the man or husband; while the child is the expression and product of the mutual love of one and the other. No one should lay rash hands upon the tabernacle of the Most High —upon this trinity which resembles, remotely, of course, the august Trinity upon which it is fashioned and created. For St. Augustine tells us that all the works of God have the same divine exemplar. Base it would be to profane or deface this living image which God has taken as the prototype for all the human family that has issued forth from the loins of Adam to be for all time the ordinance according to which the human family must proceed till time shall be no more—till the coming of Him when indeed those who are alive shall

not go before those who shall have been born or exist.

In pagan times, the state of women was little short of slavery. While there are not wanting great examples of womankind and of love and disinterestedness of many husbands, yet reading the pages of history we are forced to acknowledge that her state was but a degree above that of the unfortunate, and in little did the wife differ from the slave. She could be divorced for trifling causes, and her children scattered in the porches of the baths where they could be found, or rather, where they would not easily be found; left to perish unless perchance some one in whose heart the well of human pity was not dried up, and who might be moved to rescue them from the dogs and dangers to which they were hourly exposed. With good reason did the Fathers of the Church reproach those who thus cast off their offspring. How far hidden infanticide, actual or anticipated, may have gone I am not able to declare. We may, however, rest assured that the extent was one with the extent of the means of hiding it. For the natural *conscience* never failed to protest against wrongdoing in this highest of duties. While the legitimate child was never sunk to the level

of the bastard, yet the latter was of a nature which the parent little accounted. Considering as well the cause of the Roman decline we know also that infanticide reducing the population necessarily reduced the strength and stability of the empire. This opened the way to the armies of the Northern invaders which Roman prowess was no longer able to resist. Besides the hidden vices to which I have referred, all the more insidious and fatal because hidden, lessened the sap and virility of the people from which the army was drawn. Absence from home in the long wars in which the soldiers were engaged, for Roman glory and the enlargement of the empire, must have diminished domestic life, and driven the soldiers to unmentionable crimes for the gratification of passion with the loss of the offspring thus rendered impossible.

Today the destruction of girls, among the Chinese, is past counting. There wives are not to be found for the boys grown to manhood. Hence it is to be feared that St. Paul's account of this matter in pagan times is to be realized. Paucity of men, scarcity of women, is the weak spot of the great celestial empire. It is but a few years ago that Li Hung Chang, the Chinese ambassador, travelling in Europe,

and his attention being called to the full dress in the Courts, remarked that in his country they had no occasion to reprove their women, because they saw less of them, or rather, saw less of their women than was seen in Europe. A bitter sarcasm, it may be upon European society, as intimating their nakedness, or it may be an honest confession that they murdered their female children as being a "drug in the market"—which, I am not able to say. Probably a sidelong fling at the *much* of the girls exposed. It is now followed by the nakedness of the legs. What next—Grecian bend was once—the frontispiece may come next.

Infanticide prevailed in paganism, infanticide prevails in China; infanticide prevails in many other parts: Is it unknown in our own great country? Great in all material resources, but fearfully, gigantically great in its want of moral sentiment—and moral instincts—and moral convictions, and moral integrity—everywhere throughout the land and through all classes of society, pleasure, lust, money, are the gods that are adored. The almighty dollar is supreme ruler of our destiny, whatever we may say, or however we may seem to be otherwise.

"Where are my children? Oh, where are my children?" Rachel cannot be comforted.

We are taught that man was created and the race propagated that there might be those who would people the earth: increase and multiply and fill the earth were the divine words spoken for this purpose. Also, that there might be those who would occupy and fill the reduced ranks of the heavenly hosts by the lapse and loss of the fallen angels who had rebelled against God, and in great measure, depleted the angelic choirs and left but those who faithful had stood in serried ranks under the leadership of the Archangel Michael. These were those who worshipped the Second adorable Person revealed to them by the Father as the Incarnate Word Who in fullness of time was to die to save mankind by His foreknown incarnation.

This two-fold purpose which the Lord has proposed in the ordinance of marriage is that which those who are faithless to their duty in this solemn obligation, would contemn and render nugatory. Virtually such sinners say to

the Creator that they will not co-operate with Him in the providence that would people the earth, nor in the diviner purpose of supplying heaven with beings who will take the place of the fallen angels: I will not consent, says the sinner, to supply heaven's deficiency, or earth's need of countless children or offspring. Hence occurs the great collision between the Creator and the creature—the fell calamity that robs heaven and earth and the souls of men of their salvation.

When, where, and how shall these objects be unfolded, that the world may see men's fidelity or infidelity to the divine providences which I have indicated? The generally received opinion is that all this will constitute the subject matter of the disclosures of judgment.

First, we would know whether the identical bodies and souls of men shall appear on that day, or whether other bodies and souls will be substituted in their place, and undergo judgment, as if identical with the bodies resurrected from the dead? Relying on the word of God we may indeed be assured that the very bodies and souls in which we live at the present time are the very ones that we shall inhabit at the last day: every blemish being removed,

every defect repaired, every malformation renovated; man in his integrity, in the perfection of form, and maturity of growth shall stand before the assembled world and in the sight of all men and angels and the all-seeing eye of the Judge in Whose presence the world trembles and would fade away.

The body of man is made up of soul and body, soul spiritual and body corporeal. Resurrection implies the oneness of the body long since dead and the soul long since awaiting its union with the other. Resurrection means the coming back to life of all that have ever lived upon this globe and that now and for ages have been buried within its motherly bosom. What a multitude, uncounted and uncountable, will then come forth. Figures could no more than count this vast throng assembled in solemn awe and conclave for this unerring and unchangeable verdict.

The same would hold good if these bodies and souls would be but identical with those already dead and called to judgment. While if the Lord should create new souls and make them dwell in new bodies, these beings would be multiplied beyond counting. Let us suppose the former or the latter. The new souls will certainly be made by the all-powerful God

and Creator Who alone can create. Let us believe that the bodies, new or old, will be drawn from the matter which constitutes the noblest earth, and that every particle of this earth will form at least one body to be inhabited by one immortal soul. How many souls would thus be formed, and how many bodies would be required for this fearful and prodigious multitude?

As to the number of souls, this would depend upon the sovereign and infinite will of God; as to the number of bodies, that would depend upon the quantity of matter as the constituent of every body.

We leave the souls in God's own hands, and confine ourselves to the quantity of matter contained in this solid mass called earth. How many bodies could be drawn or extracted therefrom? How many square inches or cubic inches or feet, or tons does this overwhelming mass contain? It is no very difficult matter to calculate. How many tons can be told by measuring the size? What is the weight of a square yard? Multiply the square by the size; weigh the cubic yard by the number of such yards in the whole earth. Thus by an easy process you can come to know the number of tons from the size. For how many bodies

would all this suffice? The number of souls will follow the number of bodies. It is estimated that twenty quintillion or twenty figures from the unit to the twentieth power of numbers are required to measure or weigh the tons that constitute the solid weight of the earth. Let all this matter be used for the formation of new bodies; the souls accompanying them as wedded to them.

Then we must not forget the 1,500,000,000, which is the estimated population of the world. How many times over would the earth be peopled if all that are now dead and decayed should be resurrected to appear in the valley of Jehosaphat? Why the earth's surface would be insufficient to contain them; not even standing room for all would be given.

How long a time would be required for this wonderful transformation and unceasing multiplication; also the miracle of ages; no cycles of eons would exhaust this all but inexhaustible duration. Of course we know that God could by a moment's work destroy all things, and in a moment renew them; as we are told He did in the beginning when He created all. But we are calculating the space of time required for the development of the economy which we have unfolded.

Whether we imagine God to create new souls, which is a matter purely imaginary, just as we read of His making a "new heaven and new earth," or confine our consideration to His summoning to life all those who are dead or shall have died before that assize, the multitude of the newly made or the number of the revived will be prodigious beyond all calculations. Untold ages would not suffice for this work of divine consummation. Here then we have before us God seeking to people heaven and compensate for the losses inseparable from the fall of man and the still greater loss from the fall of the angels—and, on the other hand, we have men in their perversity abusing and perverting and frustrating, in a word, doing all that lies in their obstinate malice to keep heaven empty or barely filled, and studying to conserve a scanty population on the globe. Fifteen hundred million is the estimated population of the world at the present time. What between God longing to fill and man longing to empty, the process of filling heaven and earth will be long continued or even an interminable period. Millions of ages or eons would not suffice for this divine work; that alone would suffice in which God by His omnipotence would consummate the task at once. But this

He is not pleased to bring to pass. His glory will be augmented by following the course which He has ordained.

This defection of offspring and this virtual frustration of the multiplication of angels and men is brought about by the crime upon which we descant and upon which God and just men have put their heaviest curse—the crime of infanticide in its unhallowed and soul destroying and body murdering forms. If it were a matter of peopling hell, the task would have been long since more than completed, although the process would still continue until more than finished.

The first act of this murderous crime is that by which conception is rendered impossible by the failure of man and wife to come together in their mystic alliance—by positively staying apart, or by only consummating so far as to desire animal gratification. To prevent, and yet to gratify lust is the invention of devils known to those who make a profession of sinning and yet would sin not; who would shudder at the thought of a consummated act, and do not shudder at all when they ignominiously cast the seed of nature and trample upon an immortal being as the refuse of the earth. Onan is the example for all time to those who

would thus incur the just resentment of the Creator in the working out and creation and salvation of the human race, and in His gracious invitation to enter heaven and enjoy the glory thereof.

The crime cannot pass with impunity. The deprivation of the offspring redounds to the curse and misery eternal, temporal and supreme, of the withered and childless parents, who go down to the grave as destitute as they were born, conscious that they have done nothing to augment the race and console themselves or any of the children of men—living embodiments of selfishness and concentrated passion, demons of lust, images of the demons' sins so graphically spoken of by Milton, when sin and Satan met in their foul encounter when sin would escape from hell.

The next cause of the crime spoken of is the destruction either by foul means, or criminal act or neglect of the foetus already animated, or if not animated, to be animated by the soul to be infused into the body prepared for its indwelling. The children thus destroyed are beyond all numeration. For every conception upon which God has imprinted the lineaments of a human being is destined to life and living. Can we believe

that any creature endowed with divine gifts, and evidently meant for an immortal existence can be but the creature of an hour or a month or a few weeks or even a few years upon the earth, then to sink into death to be no more? Is this the end which Omniscience and Omnipotence has even played upon this creature of His hands? What? Tell me that the babe just born, or about to be born, wonderfully organized with brain, soul, heart, capable of thought and will, was designed by the Almighty to breathe its existence for a brief moment and then sink into the clay or even the image of solid marble to be as if it had never been? Can this be the purpose of this creature conceived in its mother's womb, imprisoned in her gentle embrace, nursed at her breasts, tenderly cared for during these early months and during the tender years of childhood, then to be hurried on the stream of time to be overwhelmed in the abyss of nothing? Can this be the purpose of the sixteen children of whom I am the fifteenth, whom my mother with incredible labor brought into life and usefulness. She was indeed with pain while thus pregnant, but was filled with joy that men were born through her arms and prayers into the children of men. What

mother would not rejoice at such a family, what family would not rejoice at such a mother? "Valiant mother, who is she and who shall not praise her."

No, the eternal design of God is written upon every human face. For no secondary or short stay was the breath of God breathed into every man, woman or child born into this world.

Who then can constitute himself the guardian or censor or slaughterer of the children of men, thus vouchsafed by the goodness and wisdom of the Creator and Provider of all humble beings? Who is to constitute himself the economist of souls, who will measure out the number of all those to be conceived and born among men?

It is estimated that one-third of the human species conceived in the womb die before they are born; it is impossible to reckon the numbers deprived of life who have a right thereto; it is believed that a vast multitude are the victims of malpractice and medicines administered to prevent birth and thus diminish the expense of living and reduce the burden of maternity, content with bestial gratification, and from a desire of economy that luxury may be otherwise served, or with some that they

may diminish the expense which is necessarily involved in the procreation and education of offspring. In these and various other ways human passion is perpetuated and the soul is allured from rectitude and led to pursue the wages of iniquity. It may be that in these various disorders there may be little sense of guilt; for men will seek to quiet conscience by dulling its sensitiveness and would persuade themselves that wrong is right, and that no iniquity is to be found in those acts that people practice with no remorse or pangs of conscience. And this may continue for a time; but sooner or later the foul error is no longer latent but makes itself unmistakably felt.

I am not too well informed as to the numbers that perish in their early days, either before or after conception or birth, or in the years immediately following those of infancy or childhood or adolescence.

I think I will not go far astray if we put the number of those who perish from one cause or other from conception to birth as one-third of the human race; those who perish from birth to childhood at two-thirds; from childhood ended to adolescence begun still another third, from the latter period to the child's majority of twenty-one at two-thirds. With all

these defections, we can easily comprehend how the race of human beings is diminished leaving but a portion, a very small portion, of those who come into being during these fatal and irreparable periods. It is obvious and irresistible not to draw the conclusion fatal to any diminution of the birth rate, or at all favorable to any claim but what we defend.

How many children should be born of every family? It is impossible to prescribe such number or lay down such a scale or limit; so much must depend upon the fecundity of the parents, their health, strength, moral integrity, and respective ages. Even the parents are at a loss sometimes to discern the mother's pregnancy, the absence from mishap or straining or out-reaching and various other causes that may delay or even prevent birth, temporarily at least. The advent of the birth of a child is always God's most precious gift. Hence when the mother feels the throb or pulsation within her womb as the smile of the babe at a later period will bespeak, will be the first sign of its consciousness, so the leaping as it were with joy will indicate the advent and speedy liberation of the child from its narrow enclosure. John the Baptist leaped in his mother on beholding the divine Infant; so when this divine

pulsation is felt by the mother, know ye that the birth of a man into the world is at hand. O, divine moment when mother, father, men and angels rejoice at the accession of another to their ranks. The moment when travail suffers, but now she rejoices because a man is born into the world.

If the fifteen hundred millions of beings that constitute the world's population were multiplied by all the fifteen hundred millions that have appeared on earth in all its varied centuries and all those added thereto who shall have been born before the last trumpet, and all those who shall be added at the last moment when Christ shall come to judge the living and the dead including those caught up in the clouds to meet Him, methinks the surface of the earth doubled, trebled, multiplied many times over would not be able to afford room, even standing room for the children of men. Those who inhabited this earth before the flood, those who came to repeople the world after its waters had subsided, those who gave birth to the people who poured forth from the loins of the children of Noah, and who came to constitute the great tribes, and nations, and peoples covering the surface of the earth, and all those who have lain within the earth's sur-

face many feet deep, and those over whom the seas and oceans roll buried from sight until that momentous day, if I say, all these were crowded together, the Valley of Jehosaphat would be but a rivulet from the vast ocean of human beings—thicker by far than the leaves that strew the earth in autumn time. Man would be shuffled together for very space as may be seen at various times when great congregations or masses of people oppress one another and smother for very air.

On that tremendous day so full of hope to the just, so full of misery to the guilty, when men will see things as they never before saw, when our hearts shall be turned inside out, when the earth shall be convulsed, when the ocean shall rise torrent high to engulf the iniquitous world and wash away the sins of men, people, mothers, fathers, progenitors of offspring shall turn from side to side, and in bitterness of soul cry out in accents never audible before "Where are my children, my offspring, the fruit of my loins—where are the children that I could have had in dozens, where are they now that they may extend a helping hand to their abandoned parents or implore the mercy of God for the crime of infanticide and child murder and blasted disappointment that

wrenched their agonized souls." What is the reply "Suffer little children to come unto Me for of such is the kingdom of heaven; better for you that you had never been born than that you should have denied life and salvation to these immortal spirits you have destroyed, or closed the gates of heaven upon those little ones for whose salvation My life blood has been poured out. Alas, alas, with a shriek that will pierce the heavens shall they cry out "Where are my children?" And then, even then, these innocents shall arise and demand vengeance upon the murderers of their bodies, the assassins of their souls, the preventers of their salvation. And even the children will arise and pronounce an eternal malediction upon those who have deprived them of their hopes and eternal bliss. Thou art good, O Lord, just and true; but in this there is no room for mercy. Hell itself is not long enough or deep enough for the sin involved in depriving childhood of its rightful claim to live and to bliss and salvation.

It has been said that some persons are more faithful to the marriage obligation in the procreation of offspring than others. This is doubtless true as we have all along contended. But this does not extenuate or augment the

said duty. All are bound thereto and whether one is more or less faithful or faithless does not change the nature of the obligation. It is a sacred duty that binds each and all without exception. Such duty does not depend upon taste or freedom of action. Free indeed to marry or not, but once married the marriage must be respected and the marriage obligation fulfilled to the letter without choice or option. If the duty is too burdensome or irksome the obligation does not cease. This should have been provided for before contracting the sacred obligation. But once assumed you are bound forever. You may be dispensed for just reason; but the marriage cannot be dissolved. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. While for reasons there may be suspension or separation, there cannot be divorce or a nullifying of the bond.

As with individuals, marriage may be congenial or imperious; so, likewise, with the natural tastes or aspirations there may be more of the marriage instinct or more tendency to what is prolific. Yet the essential office must always abide. Some natures are more prone to propagation than others; but all must have or cultivate this marriage proclivity; if this is found beyond their power, it remains for

them to stay abstinent or enter the religious state. The Holy Church adapts herself to all; to those called to marriage; to those not so called.

What is peculiar to individuals is also characteristic of nations. Italy, oriental countries, Germany, Ireland, and what we may designate as warm-blooded tribes of peoples are all disposed to fulfill the mandate: increase and multiply and fill the earth. The cold-blooded tribes are not so disposed, and would seek to exonerate themselves from this divine law, or are given to a different class of vices. Or, non-observant of marriage they seek gratification in other ways: beyond that of marriage.

Various are the iniquitous means by which human offspring is suppressed and reduced below what it should amount to. Some resort to poisonous substances by which the foetus is crippled and rendered an abortus; others resort to violence to crush the infant already conceived or about to be; others by sudden or premature births bring on miscarriage which frequently ends with the death of both mother and child; others by carelessness not short of crime lead to the same sad results.

No wonder the populations of cities and nations are being brought to a minimum result-

ing in the detriment and weakness of a whole people, and thus enfeebled they cannot protect themselves against foreign armies or enemies when summoned to war and self-defense.

What can be expected when the number of a family is reduced to a few—we should reckon its members at eight or ten or a dozen or even more? Two or three are a sorry count against such numerous progeny as may be seen in Ireland, England, Germany and many other lands famous for their prolific offspring. Compare the family of two or three in some of the eastern states of this great land with the swarming groups of families elsewhere throughout the world, say in Russia and Prussia. Millions of children have perished in Russia during the past few years. Sad indeed it was. But they were not then with prodigious fruitfulness or they would not have died in such multitudes. The same is to be said of Ireland; the children of that land could not have fallen victims of the famine-stricken Ireland that reddened their graves with their blood.

For even then the providence of God was at hand with bountiful resources in spite of, or in shame of, the £20,000 in the Bank of England, more than enough to tide over the calam-

itous pestilence and potato blight which impoverished the land and reduced the four millions to one half the number, in spite of all that foreign aid had done to rescue the people from starvation.

Nothing shows the inherent depravity of the female character than infanticide or reluctance to child bearing when viewed in its various forms. For there is no disposition of the female heart or soul which cherishes greater desire for children when once born, and the obstacles already spoken of are laid aside. For it is fashion, or folly, or selfishness, or luxury or proneness to self-love and over-indulgence and inordinate attachment to this world and its society, and various other blandishments and fascinations of sense, and with no self denial, that lead men and women to place their happiness in not having children; where indeed it should always be sought where God and nature have placed the most supreme of delights, making of life a veritable paradise and immortal bliss.

By infanticide or child murder, actual or anticipated by poisonous draughts or deadly potions, or unnatural passion or accidents sought or not shunned, or drugs prepared for the purpose, do women seek to release themselves of

the incubus which the rightful use of nature has lawfully brought about. This is the practice in modern times, not less than in former ages. In pagan history we know the abhorrence with which mothers regarded their offspring. As the old were cast on an island to live or die as best they could—treated as so many animals, so superfluous children were cast aside in the porches of the temples to be devoured by dogs unless some charitable Christian passed by, moved by compassion, would rescue from danger and fondle to their own maternal bosom the children of whom Christ said "Suffer the little ones to come to Me for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Deservedly do the Christian preachers reproach this indifference, this hard-hearted brutality of the pagans to this insensibility to human offspring. Not less but even more is the contempt of children murderers in these more recent times. It is insensibility steeled to flint—to indifference, to the most cruel selfishness that allows man or woman to exhibit such hell-born cruelty to the fruit of their womb, which they seem to account as the refuse of their bodies; while indeed it is their union of soul and body, the one vouchsafed by the beneficence of nature's holy ordinance, the

other by the immortal gift of heaven graciously vouchsafed by the living God.

If we study the nature of this vice and the passions to which it gives rise in the female breast, it will be found that it is the spring and origin of all the most disastrous instincts of the female character. It is indeed the fuel of all lusts and the incentive to which the sex is ordinarily addicted and which enslaves them to the lowest propensities of their hearts. Lust in its various forms, in thought, in internal bodily feeling, and the worst species of evil suggestions, the result of inward concupiscence or external incitement. Cruelty is the twin companion of all impurities. It foments haughtiness, tyrannical imperiousness and concentrated anger—oppression of the humble, changeableness or unsteadiness, drunkenness, dark dissipation, full of strife and gluttony, the spirit of contention and contradiction, self-conceit, or self-sufficiency, pretext of superior knowledge, fondness for the theatre and buffoonery, evil spirits, fortune telling, future events, superstition or belief in child murder, husband contempt, and even slaughter. Abnormal passion for those far younger than themselves; hatred of their husband's offspring. Shamming children not their own;

cruelty to their own offspring; gallantry uninvited to draw notice or observation; always to be studiously avoided. Stubborn cultivation of a blind and imperious will; ignorance and yet affectation of superior skill and taste and refinement; inclination to commend wrongdoing for sake of evading obedience to their whims and caprices and frivolities; the unceasing study of fashion, bodily adornment, bells on their feet, with dress frequently so made as to excite passion in men by criminal and nude exposure; by gazing intently upon the face or peering into the eyes with prurient curiosity and to have the gaze reciprocated with evil purpose or lust.

No wonder the population of the world is kept under its fifteen hundred thousand millions. For what dominates society? For avarice man lives and dies and draws his sword, spends his youth, wastes his manhood, hoards savings that he will never use or enjoy, or finds them in gratification or riches or satisfaction. Gluttony and intemperance undermine his health, engender disease, premature decay, decreptitude, and old age comes on while yet in adolescence; paint and powder are used to give a semblance of health and vigor, bodily organs soon are unnerved and wasted,

dissipation and dissoluteness are the compensations afforded for intoxication and libidinous pleasure eagerly sought. Such is the value put upon health and strength and healthful resources. The evil example of parents tells upon the fount of health and braceful vigor, the perennial spring whence is replenished all our faculties and powers—the spiritual substance of soul and the imperishable body meant to be preserved if such be the will of the Creator.

What is more precious than the child just born? Does heaven or earth contain anything more divine? No marvel that of this wondrous mechanism, this soul created by the right hand of God, with heart, lungs, brain, and all the rest—the mother of the Macabees exclaimed to the dying martyr-children: it was not I who arranged and set in order the wondrous structure of your bodies, but the invisible God Who created all things in heaven and earth. There is nothing buried in the bosom of the earth nor in the depths of the ocean, no diamond or gem or platinum, nothing of which we have any knowledge that can be compared, no onyx or jewel or precious stone that the wit of man has discovered more valuable or more inextricable that the human soul in its taber-

nacle of a human body, more precious because soul and body—two natures, diviner than even angelic nature. Whether anything more clearly the work of God can be conceived we know not. Assuredly we know of nothing loftier or diviner.

I do remember that once, many years ago, I heard a woman, otherwise unexceptional in character, complain of her labor and efforts to bring up a large family of children, troublesome, disobedient and unruly with little inclination to a virtuous life; when to soften her nature and calm her irritableness, I offered to relieve her of one or more of her children, and if need be to relieve her of all. I even offered her many houses for even one of her children, the most perverse; while looking at me with surprise and scorn, which soon turned to indignation, she exclaimed: No! not for a fortune or houses or blocks of houses would she part with the gifts which a good God had sent to her, and that sooner than part with any one of them, she would bear bravely the trials which He had seen fit to send her; that God's gifts were not without alloy, yet they were His own.

By what right or sense of duty have parents, one or the other or both, to place any limit

to their offspring? It belongs to the sovereign power of the Creator to ordain the number, or sex, or faculties which He sees fit to prescribe to His creatures. It is the exclusive privilege of the Creator. Who will alienate from Him this indisputable prerogative? It is the loftiest duty and indefeasible privilege of the Father to whom the paternity belongs. Who will abdicate this supreme office or restrain this fulfillment? It is as much the instinctive and loving ordinance of the mother, who will in season nurse, fondle and breathe holy inspiration into this offspring; who will enslave this mother by denying to it its most gracious aspirations. Who can deny or curtail to the family all that belongs to it? Under no circumstances can this perverse authority be perverted or nullified.

But there are those who allow to perish those who are maimed or deformed, or weak in body or enfeebled in mind or gifted with less than other children. Who has vouchsafed what God has not seen fit to grant, and yet has not deprived such offspring of, but allowed them to enter into life and enjoy what they can of human existence. For who would die though full of pain and lacking many of the gifts and endowments that constitute life

in its integrity? Life imperfect is better and a greater source of felicity than its entire deprivation. The man with but one leg or arm, or deprived of the gifts of poet or orator, is in a far superior condition to possess and enjoy life with all that goes with it than the man deprived of these even in a high degree.

There have been those wanting much and yet actually capable of the greatest works; statesmen, politicians, poets, heroes, who led armies and established states and civilized great portions of mankind. What was taken from them in one way was recompensed in other respects. History is replete with such instances. It is but a few years ago, when a member of Parliament, handless, learned to write with his toes. I could point out many others who thus compensated for the great loss which they suffered. John Milton was blind when he began his immortal "Paradise Lost." But providence had given him his daughter to whom he dictated his sublime poem. Such instances are by no means few or difficult to be found on the pages of history.

Who then will say that God cannot compensate for such grievances? Who will say that it is not better to be than not to be?

Who will enumerate all the gains that would

be lost to the world if fidelity to the law of offspring were not fulfilled? Sad indeed to think of the unspeakable losses which occur by the failure of procreating, the fruit of marriage? In ten thousand ways is this the deterioration of the children of men.

There are those who say that this curtailment of birth is for the purpose of improving the human race. How, when, where? Improving the race by destroying the race! Diminishing the race and thus by process of selection gathering in the best! This would be a species of the survival of the fittest! But who has the right to make this choice between the works of God, and set his wisdom above that of the Creator? What you make of the higher rank may, according to the mediocrity of your intelligence and the narrowness of your base conception, be but a miserable substitute for God's divine counsels.

In the child lies the salvation of the future. This is the hope: this is the fear. Look into the vast miscellaneous multitude of them as they fill our streets and schools; some religious, some truly godless. In the midst of the vast multitude, how many destined to heaven, how many doomed to hell. To how many is salvation a nothing; to how many is salvation a real-

ity? Of these rational beings how many shall be the sharers of an eternal reward; how many be the sharers of a destiny similar to that of captured beings, or destined to hell, sin, and temporal misery as a preliminary?

If Christ should appear once more and with this multitude around Him, could He say "Unless you become as one of these little ones ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"? How truly could He say that it were better that a millstone be hung around your neck and that you be cast into the sea than that you scandalize one of these little ones for whom Christ died. Could they be so at present and filled with the love of God so as to cast off all further peril and be delivered to the ranks of the wicked, we would have little to mourn for, for the Church would be ready to grieve for them. The child must be taken by the hand, the key of the future must be in his satchel, his future must be a continuation of the prayers which found accent in his soul from the motherly lips which taught him the aspirations which beamed in his first smile.

It were even better that a millstone be hung around your neck and that you be cast into the sea than that you scandalize one of these little ones for whom Christ died.

Rachel bewailing her children because they are not! How many Rachels throughout society are bewailing their children because they are lost or never entered life?

The mysteries of God are beyond all comprehension; but the mysteries of life are, if possible, even greater. In considering the mysteries of life we need not go beyond what is nearest to us, and seek it in the heavens above, or buried in the earth or even in the waters that cover it and that apparently would make all objects impervious to us. That which is most hidden contains the greatest and most inconceivable and inscrutable to our minds or vision.

We are to be understood to speak of the animalculae which constitute all beings and objects, and are the living and sustaining principle of every particle whether the least or the greatest—whether the least that can exist, or that the mind of man can comprehend. These infinite animalculae are no longer to be conceived as destitute of form and organism, as

was formerly the prevailing opinion of them. But untold millions, infinite in power and indefinite in multitude are as revealed by the microscope, perfect entities or complete organisms endowed with senses, with nerves, muscles, sight, physical compositions as perfect as the huge leviathan that swims the vast ocean, or the lion that roams through the forest, and with its terrific roars and those of the elephant make the earth tremble, or the leaves that turn their color pale, are millions of microscopic beings, of which we cannot number the species, or the genus or the numbers, constitute this globe and for all we know, are the very substances of the planets that roll in space, millions of which could, like the earth, be reduced to the compass of a cubic inch. For the whole world, we are told, could be reduced to this inconceivable size. Such is the teaching of Sir Isaac Newton. This exuberant profusion of life and being is what fills us with amazement and makes us tremble at the omnipotence of God and the absolute nothingness of ourselves, who have come into existence by the simple fiat of the illimitable power of the Creator, without Whose sustaining hand we would at once lapse into the nothing from which we sprang. By-gone

worlds have from their debris supplied the ashes from which the actual systems have come. How vast and withering this conception! How it blanches the cheek, and makes us fall into insignificance and emptiness! Truly, God, Thou art inconceivable in Thy works and inscrutable in Thy wisdom, and inexhaustible in Thy power!

What is the divine purpose for which all things were made. An all-powerful God has made these countless myriads of beings—endless in number, inconceivable in nature—these undiscovered beings without apparently an end commensurate therewith? Why these mysterious animals; say, elephants, under whose heavy trodding the earth quakes, and whose enormous pressure and weight cause them to sink into the earth so far and make such ineffaceable impressions that they are made indelible, so that they are found after the accumulated masses of earth has been buried beyond the reach and almost beyond the keenest human vision or the penetrating all-seeing microscope? Why those gigantic animals that roam the forest, or scale the loftiest trees; or loiter through the mountain passes and bury themselves in the thick overgrowth of vegetation that becovers the

surface of the earth? Why has He made the huge leviathan that floats or plunges in the ocean, and disports itself in the deepest sea or descends to its bottom and then again gently ascends and glides upon the surface, swallowing up myriads of the smaller of fish kind? Why has God sent the animalculae of countless kinds and wondrous power—roaring as lions, or again gentle as the birds that morning and night sing their gentle notes in praise of the Almighty Creator?

Why has God gathered together the infinite group of particles that constitute the lofty mountains or the inland oceans or lakes or the immeasurable bodies of water that cover two-thirds of the earth's surface or dried up the waters in the moon or in millions of stars or reduced to flat surfaces that which the telescope discloses in the far off realms of space where we know not that life subsists, or if it does it is not the rational life divinely endowed with will, memory and understanding? Whence comes those mountains as lofty in height as the great oceans are deep in abyss; the height of the one balancing the depth of the other?

In the beginning God made all things animate and inanimate, and endowed all animal

nature with the power of self propagation. Increase and multiply was His command to every form of life. For, of themselves, they could not increase and multiply. His word was the benediction that made fruitful the innate vitality and pregnancy which He had planted in all seed, rational and irrational, created. Behold the stars of heaven: such shall be thy offspring: behold the declaration again renewed after another one thousand years: behold the blessing and the grace poured upon all creatures when Christ sent His disciples to teach all men to be baptized and purified from all sin-smitten creatures. Was all this for nothing, or did all indicate the negligence which was to fall upon them all? Or rather, did it not indicate as clearly as could be shown the wishes and purposes which He had over all the works of His hands and the fostering care with which He would have these divine benedictions cherished and brought to life and fruitfulness, and the loftiest maturity and productiveness?

Nothing is more frequent and nothing calls for greater vehemence of condemnation than the crime of polygamy; and we would fain descant upon the atrocity of this enormous offense. And even among those who would

soften or palliate this outrage: instead of there being more wives than one, there may be several, whether it be simultaneous or successive. And yet before we inflict with unsparing condemnation or we conclude those guilty of this sin, let us pause and consider whether polygamy with all its horrors is worse or even as wicked as having no offspring at all, or but one or few children. Is it better to have none or have but a few? Is it better to exercise the ordinance of nature to excess or abuse it entirely? Or abuse the ordinance continually? In the one case you multiply the offspring promiscuously and without limit; in the other, you abuse it always; and do all that lies in you to gratify passion and at the same time to frustrate the design of an all-wise Creator, for the diffusion of the race, and contemn every motive but beastly gratification and become as beasts that roam the fields and seek for nothing but beast-like gratification after the manner of horses and cows and other irrational beings? You sink yourselves beyond your true and only rank, i.e., the rank and superiority of rational nature; a being meant to look upon the earth, and adore God, you sink flat upon the earth, upon which you crawl as if gifted with four legs instead of two; animals versus souls.

Not even divorce, the vampire of society, and so fearfully prevalent throughout the length and breadth of society, at the rate of a divorce for every thousand people or a thousand divorces for every million, can destroy human society in the measure which abuse of marriage can decimate the most prolific populations, rendering an oasis in the desert of society, and the death and dearth of human souls can compensate for or replace the human beings lost through this horrid plight which let loose would soon depopulate the world. It is nothing but the vast number of births that disguises the bloodshedding and waste of human life that throws a pall over iniquity, making a desolation and calling it populousness. A pestilence walks the earth, and we call it the prosperity that enables human beings to enjoy in greater degree the goods of the earth. In vain would men stake their affluence upon the starvation that flourishes on iniquity, making a desert and calling it wisdom—a wisdom that contravenes the order of providence which a right noble philosophy has taught us to condemn and flee away from. A curse surely is among all the land that once flourished under the benign influence of Christ-like influence, and divine beneficence.

Alas for France, England and America, this land of ours, once so favored with population and honor.

We are told that the earth is not sufficient to feed such vast population—and in the comfort and prodigality which a teeming earth provides. No more atrocious falsehood ever fell from the mouth of Malthus or any of his disciples. Ireland with all her poverty, England with its prodigious wealth, South America with her Peru, and some of the most richly endowed countries are all incalculably abundant to fill all the mouths of men that all countries can propagate; and all the possible people that could exist for ages untold to come, and provide themselves more than enough for all the children of men who might accommodate the most prolific people that the loins of our first father sent forth to increase and multiply the earth. Perish then the false and cursed philosophy that would run athwart the ways of God blessing His providence for the good of men, and laying blessings upon the children of the earth, when man's iniquity would utter and proclaim a curse and a blight or famine upon the earth, and starvation staring men in the face.

Why has God piled up and accumulated

these particles and animalculae, infinite in multitude, material or spiritual in nature, these lofty mountains and their planets limitless in size and unending in distance, so difficult of distance that it is only by powerful telescopes and more powerful microscopes that we can learn whether they are spiritual or material, whether corporal bodies or spiritual substances, whether animated or inanimated.

For what purpose has God done all this? Is it not clearly because it was for a design worthy of Himself and His sovereign intelligence? Could He have enveloped these with the laws of creation and with complete indifference to their future fate? Can He with the same indifference behold these laws transgressed and violated and trampled upon? Can the wisdom of man collide with His wisdom, and His Own wisdom be overmatched. Can His ordained laws, according to which the human race now numbering not fewer than fifteen hundred million, covering a large portion of the earth, be extinguished upon the plea that the earth does not supply food for all mortals—that the all-bountiful hand of Him Who makes the sun shine and the rain fall upon the just and the unjust, Who feeds the birds of the air and without Whose permission

not even a sparrow falls,—yet neglects His noblest creature man, Who brings us into life, and preserves us in all the trials and dangers and vicissitudes of life? Perish such a base philosophy.

Grievous beyond expression must be the sin of those who contravene the law and ordinances of God, Who has said increase and multiply and fill the earth. Which command made in the beginning was renewed one thousand years later when Noah and his family issued from the ark; and again another one thousand years later when the Maker of the new laws and the Saviour of mankind reaffirmed them in the mandate to preach the Gospel to every man and pour the great baptismal founts on the earth washing away original sin and all the other stains which the souls of men had contracted.

Nothing sillier or absurder can be imagined than that blatant nonsense which we hear so many indulge in, that the welfare of the race demands curtailment of the birth rate. On the contrary, nothing is more advantageous to the race than the full growth and development of all the virile powers of man and woman. Nothing can be more conducive to the good of society and the health and moral powers of individuals than the full observance without

sin or misuse and especially without any stain of impurity than the law of the Most High: Increase and multiply; nothing more salutary than the lesson of St. Paul, save your souls so as by child bearing, for in it will be found the fulfillment of the whole duty which men and women owe to themselves and to God. "In thy children shalt thou be blessed and find salvation and pleasure to God."

What society needs most to-day is the casting out of the plague of incentives to impurity, polygamy, and the brutal gratification of bestial instincts without the accompanying blessing of offspring that may augment the family, foster domestic life, strengthen the bonds of social life and lead to the betterment of human society.

Truly whatever is detrimental to the growth of population is well designated as race suicide. For similar sins precede or accompany or follow the building up of the family. In the recent war the strength of German armies was owing to the masculine diffusion of the German people; the weakness of French armies was the result of French inefficiency and aversion to child bearing. Hence had it not been for the potent help received from this country, we cannot say how it would have fared with the

issue of the recent war. And in proportion as the armies, German, French, English and American were reduced in numbers in the same proportion was the bloodshed and warfare prolonged. The same cause was felt as weakening the armies of the Roman empire during its decline and fall.

In the hands of its future and its fidelity to moral right depends the future of the race and the welfare of our country and of all countries. The population of a country can never be in excess of the fertility and productiveness necessary to support the lives whom God has placed in it. The increase may indeed be geometrically ahead of the arithmetic power of its fertility, yet it will be found that its fruitfulness keeps pace with the procreation of its sons and daughters, so that it becomes absolutely true that the mouth was never made for which food was wanting. By economy and dint of perseverance and industry, all deficiency is supplied. If what is wanting is not found just in that very locality—which seems to call for it—means of transportation will easily supply conveyance. For hunger is indigenous to no place, and thrift becomes profusion. It has been well said that the rich and abundant become God's provider to the

poor. So, likewise, the vigilant and ever active care of God will see that no one of His creatures perishes for the sustenance to support life. The birds of the air, the fishes of the deep, the insects that pick up the crumbs from the Master's table, show a similar frugality which for them becomes a rich profusion. The lilies of the field, the flowers peering their heads through the thick grass show the same God-like care and the pervading providence that reaches unto all things even the minutest, and what would seem otherwise to escape observation.

If men cannot find sufficiency for their mouths or the hands to fill them in the teeming affiuence that surrounds them on every side and in the teeming crops that cover the unfailing earth, instead of blaspheming the providence of God, look around you and you will find causes enough for the penury in bad or unwise legislation, in oppressive forms of coercion, unending warfare, and desolation and misery of various kinds, of selfishness, which cripple society and turn into famine and destitution, vice and crime.

It is indeed difficult, if not impossible, to understand why parents do not see and realize the enormous crime of not conceiving children,

but are so easily led to this treacherous violation of God's law that brings upon them so serious consequences, and seem to think it a matter of little consequence not only to hinder but even to frustrate this supreme law which God has impressed upon their souls and consciousness—a law which calls to heaven for vengeance because of the abomination which it imparts; of course they may delude themselves with the stupid and sinful fatuity of improving upon God's wisdom and of invoking a curse instead of a blessing upon His sovereign omniscience. But they may rest assured that God's providence shall be avenged, if not to-day or to-morrow, at least, or at farthest, in the days that are to come, when maturity is past and they find themselves in the vale of years as they go to their graves unsolaced, uncomforted, but attended by a solitary child upon whom it devolves to assuage the sadness of old age, if even such a consolation be not denied them—when left to themselves they find they are as the cursed fig tree, or the withering or withered offspring and without hope, as decayed branches who once were the home of life and health and fruitfulness.

If a moment's thought or a mere instantane-

ous act is and always proves such a contravention of the ordinances of nature, such a contradiction of the laws of God must be a most heinous offense, and calculated to involve the guilty one in what we may designate as the guilt of all nature, inasmuch as it would diminish or destroy nature, and cause human nature to perish from the face of society and destroy the population of the world. This indeed would be the most dastardly and terrific abortion of which man or woman could be guilty. For a single abortion would be one in crime with the abortion that goes before. Anticipated murder is no less murder than what is actual. Because we do not see the crime for which and to which we apply the iniquities, it is nevertheless as truly a rebellion against high heaven, and is clothed with the guilt of mortal sin, as any such that from original sin has come down to us on the tide of time, and which can never cease till God in His hot indignation will consume the world, and sink the fornicators and adulterers, and sodomites and child-murderers and all such progeny of impurity into hell, their rightful home; where the fire is not extinguished nor the torture ended. Sodom and Gomorrah send their loud cry to heaven to avenge the murder of their little ones, of whom

Jesus has said that it were better for one not to have been born than that these divine infants should perish, or the gates of life slammed ignominiously in their faces seeking life and salvation and the embrace of their Saviour. Rachel truly bewailed her children because they were not, nor can they be found among the lost angels, and children of men and the cast-asides of mothers cruel and selfish themselves, victims of self-love and selfishness.

Besides the object of the physical ordinance of nature, which is obviously the procreation of offspring, which God has sanctified and embellished with His grace and power, the twofold end of marriage is the propagation and conservation of the human race—the repeopling of heaven deprived of so many by the fall of the angels, the evolution of the providence of God, in creating new beings for human society, while its supernatural end is mainly the bestowal of salvation and redemption upon the greatest number of creatures upon whom God sees fit to confer this gratuitous bounty—that is, in other words, the accomplishment of God's work both in the natural and the supernatural order.

This being the case it is impossible to overlook the stupendous mystery of human pro-

creation and the eternal consequences that depend upon man's fidelity or infidelity to this sacred and indefeasible duty. The conclusion is unavoidable that escape from this supreme destiny is not allowed to any child of Adam or Eve, or any of their offspring. That the race once started upon its unfailing course will continue until all shall be called to judgment and every one called upon to manifest the deeds of virtue of their lives or the good that they shall have done in their working out of the share assigned them by an all wise and all-beneficent and all-knowing God, the Creator and Redeemer.

Away, then, with the silliness of those who exclaim few children, but the best. This is but a hollow sham set up by those who, at a loss to extenuate or excuse their evil, would fain persuade themselves that such a hollow mockery may defend them from their gross iniquity. They who contemn the sovereign mandate of the Creator care very little whether their offspring be good or bad; they would as lief that it were none if they could only gratify lust and passion. For this they would sacrifice all, and relegate to the poor and God-fearing the task of bearing children. A few and a very few children would add a certain

decorum to life, but so as that they may not lose self-gratification nor by the restraint of self-denial, but allowed to wallow in every channel of filth and corruption. For can it ever be forgotten that there is abstinence in indulgence and that matrimony does not open the flood gates of iniquity, on the plea of lawful gratification. You shall be saved so as by child bearing, exclaims St. Paul—not for the pleasure, but for the suffering which it imparts, and the labor of pregnancy which it carries with it. A woman is in agony until her child is born; but when born, she rejoices because a man is born into the world. For every child that comes into the world fills the mother and the world with multiplied joy. Every man has heard of Segneri, the great Italian orator, the greatest that Italy has produced since Cicero. He was the twenty-fifth child of the same parents. Nor are there wanting in these modern days instances of families bearing sixteen children. In one case the writer knows of one which is the fifteenth child followed by the sixteenth. The latter is dead; but the fifteenth is still alive and at the mature age of seventy-eight. Think you that there was not a blessing upon such cases; or that

the parents of such would have done better by using the contraception to render impossible such births, or by the fragile remedy of an abortus. Modern science calls to its aid the latter. The mother easily yields to the advice of her physician and even rewards him with an enormous fee for whispering in her ear that the next child she bears will be her last for the child and for herself. Mother or child, exclaims the all-knowing physician; which? To this the medical butcher gives every assurance of a successful operation. Call there a day after, inquire and ask of the success of the operation. The doctor answers that it was the most successful he ever performed. How about the mother? Oh, she is doing as well as might be expected; which may be death or life. How about the child? Oh, the child is dead, stolen away at night and secretly buried. How could you expect a man to go through with the whole ceremony under such circumstances? Look out, young woman, for your offspring. If you are placed in such an unfortunate dilemma, womanly bear yourself; be a mother. If you cannot care for, don't want or be mindful of your offspring, hand it over to one of the homes where zealous and devoted women

make themselves mothers for your offspring and inherit from heaven the rewards which such heroism is sure to inherit and receive.

Do you propose to contravene the purpose of God in this peopling of the earth and in thus augmenting the myriads of the heavenly spirits, by your crimes against conscience, and your contrarieties amidst the harmonies which God has introduced among men and angels? Do you think that you will ever be able to throw yourselves against and overcome or even to diminish the fifteen hundred millions of souls that cover the earth and the countless multitude of beings, the growth and development of divine power and omniscience, which in His inscrutable wisdom He is able to create till His power would be inexhaustible, which signifies the termination of all things. For not till God Himself would cease to be, could His wisdom to devise and His power to form all beings, animate and inanimate, come to an end; infinity and inexhaustibility go together, they are correlative.

Do you imagine that your iniquity will prove equal to diminish even by one spirit the glorious realms of space and the countless angels that fill these realms and boundless space, that proclaim and sing the glorious canticles sung

on high? No, surely you will not; you have no such purpose. What then is your aim and ambition? Simply to gratify the immortal part of you by that which only can satisfy sensual and corporal gratification. A sorry exchange, you cannot help exclaiming. Eternity yields to time; the soul yields to the body; that which is best and divinest in man yields to that which is but flesh and blood, heaven is bartered for hell; an ignominious pleasure for the lofty aspiration which fills us and gives us eternal bliss.

These things does God hate: a lying tongue, the murder of the innocent, the shedding of the seed of nature. The first because it is not only a sin against justice, but contempt of the Holy Ghost. The second because they who are thus guilty render the cries of the innocent to pierce heaven, and deprive the young, the children of Rachel, the victims of Herod of the right, the God-given right to existence. The third because of the wasting of that than which nothing is more precious before high heaven—the receptacle of immortal souls, the earthly tabernacles of those destined to everlasting bliss. For all these iniquities does God reserve His justest indignation and most condign vengeance.

And yet doest thou, O man or woman, victim

of beastly gratification, incur this sovereign displeasure and wrath of the blessed Creator Whose only object in making man is to make him a partaker of His own happiness and glory? How easily could He have refrained from making, or putting him into a shape that would exhibit him to be the monster that his sins have made him, unworthy of his God-like and human face divine. In the freedom of his will, the power of his faculties, his acquisition of knowledge, he walks the earth as king only to sink himself to crawl like another Nebuchadnezzar on his fours, like the beast to which state the unfortunate king was subjected, eating grass and filth like any other beast or brute.

Onan struck dead by Almighty God for shedding of the seed of nature. Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt for looking back upon the moral degradation from which she fled, the thousands swallowed up by the earth opening and consuming the fornicators, are but true and unexaggerated punishments which God reserves for those guilty of the atrocious crimes which fill the world and from which the souls of men perish and are but as many of the damned who are continually forfeiting bliss and incurring hell, damnation and becoming victims of everlasting reprobation.

O ye children of men when will you learn to observe the mandates of your God, and seek Him and His supreme pleasure before it is too late! Thinkest thou that you will escape His omniscient eyes and the supreme laws of conscience written in your hearts according to which all judgment shall be rendered at the last day! Away with all vain pretexts seeking to extenuate or nullify the law of increasing and multiplying the children of men and filling the earth that it may augment indefinitely beyond the fifteen hundred millions that now cover it, leaving space for generations, tribes and nations yet unborn and which have a right to be born as the least of men whose day may be but that of an hour upon the earth. Oh, if all those who have been born, and still more, if all those who could have been born but were denied existence by human selfishness and human rapacity, upon whom the portals of life were closed by the iniquities of parents, had come upon the earth, the earth itself would be insufficient to contain them.

I have exposed as well as I know how the terrific evils of the crime of moral and physical suicide of nations or of families; of the disruption of the family and the utter decimation of society, social or otherwise, thence resulting; of

the huge moral volcano hanging over the human family, and ready to break its barriers and deluge the world with evils of which we cannot prognosticate the extent or foresee where they may lead us, and see our fondest and most endearing hopes and aspirations dashed to the earth and irrevocably lost. It is impossible to divine the individuals who have perished and may still perish in the whirlpool, in the unlimited havoc that is ready to engulf the population of the world. Who can estimate or even calculate or will ever estimate the countless souls and bodies that have fallen victims before this dreadful deluge, compared with which the old deluge was but a sorry image?

Who can tell when the creation of souls shall cease, and the bodies, their receptacles, will return to the earth from which they sprang, it may be unwept, unhonored and unsung, without tasting the immortal pleasure for which they longed and will in all eternity long without anything more substantial than endless confusion and blank despair!

We claim no power of calculation by which we even proximately can declare the number that have been deprived of salvation, by never knowing birth, nor the happiness of existence

once born, or the brief, the very brief hour which beings can last on earth, when overtaken by the calamities of life and death, thus compelled to return to abysses of nothingness, or the overwhelming misery of woe, or the silent horrors of a lifeless putrefaction. For what profits the body to go down into that life, or rather death, from which there is no reawakening, upon which no ray of sun sheds his glorious light suggestive of undying life?

I have considered this flagitious sin from most of the relations which it presents to the thoughtful and to those who will own that God cannot be without interest in His own laws—laws which He has made and which He is bound to embrace upon speaking to the human conscience.

Who will measure the enormity of the guilt of this wickedness? Who will number the multiplied multitude of sins involved in this heinous and increasing iniquity?

I could have gone farther and by easy digression and near proximity to the subject—asked you to reflect upon the sin of fornication viewed as the efficacious means of precluding offspring. A sin which in times past did not fail to incur the supreme anger of God. Fornication which while glutting passion abates

and even quenches the inborn longing for posterity.

I could have descanted upon sodomy in its varied forms and shown how inherent in such an atrocious sin must be the anger of God by which He pursues it with seven fold lashes and sinks it into hell as its just retribution.

It was reserved for St. Paul with his burning and piercing pen to vituperate the ancient philosophers for the pederasty which they cultivated towards their young of the same sex; and as seeking sensual pleasure, and illicit love with boys with no regard to the thoughts, the age and virtue of the young and innocent; in this disorder by its very irregularity overwhelming their desire and murdering to wanton lust and irregular and unnatural desire.

Thirty thousand or more swallowed up by a convulsion of the earth speaks in thunder tones of impurity, incest, fornication, infanticide, actual and anticipated, more powerful and soul-piercing than that of St. Michael on heaven's parapets declaring the end of all things and that time shall be no more. Let all men come forth to judgment and receive the wages of reward or the curse due to their evil or their bliss.

Now I must conclude.

The Holy Trinity

All things proclaim the existence of God—of His unity, power, omnipotence, omniscience, and all of the other prerogatives that belong to His nature. At the same time, it is equally clear that there is but one God—one in nature and many in attributes. While His nature is but one, His personal relations are many. Just as we say when we extend our hand into space and assert the height and breadth and depth of space. These aspects of the Trinity may be regarded as personal. So, likewise, all things relating to the divine nature, which is one in its nature and multiple in its relations. All these prerogatives of the Godhead are the same, except that one is not the other—one in nature as intimated by the word name which refers essentially to the divine nature; but the other qualities in it are omnipotence and everlastingness in His wisdom, in His power, and in every attribute with which we may believe His divine nature to be endowed, though all are personal relations which constitute the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy

Ghost is God; but there are not three gods. There is but one God, the same in nature, but different in all His personal relations. Hence it is that we use the term God as the name of His nature while we imply all the other attributes as so many qualifications and prerogatives of the divine nature.

On this blessed Feast of the Holy Trinity, we know that Christ sent His apostles into the whole world to baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. St. John had baptized in water and the Holy Ghost, but the Eternal Son baptized in the name of the august Trinity and by virtue and by power of the Divine Spirit, the Paraclete, Who came forth from the Father and the Son. All the sacraments established by Christ in and for His Church are the fruit of the divine gratuity of Christ. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost all our sins are forgiven and in the same names the sacraments are administered to impart to us divine grace, as well as to make us escape all the horrors of mortal sin and to reunite us with the mystical spouse of the Church which is the creation of Jesus Christ. It were impossible for us to comprehend even imperfectly the inexhaustible riches and graces which

Christ confers upon humanity by the graces He gives us in baptism, in confession, in the Holy Eucharist, in extreme unction, and in all the other sacraments with which He has exalted the renovated state of our lost humanity.

Of all the illustrations which we can find in nature or grace, there is none that proclaims to us more profusely the nature of the divine Trinity than that illustration which we find in the operations of the human mind. When we look into it, we find there the will, the memory, the understanding: the will by which we love, the memory by which we understand, the faith by which we comprehend the eternal workings of the Son from the Father and of the Father from the Holy Ghost. When we allow our minds to contemplate any object, we find therein either pleasure or satisfaction or aversion. If the object presented is pleasing to us, we pass on to love it; if the object presented creates aversion in our mind we turn away from it; but when the will and memory and understanding are all united and coalesce in the one object, oh then, indeed, we find in our very mind an image, strong although imperfect, of the procession of the eternal Persons from one another.

But it may be that we will form our best idea of the Trinity by plunging resolutely into it; not fearing to exalt ourselves where angels fear to tread; for, under the guidance of the prophets and inspired teachers, we are not apt to fall into any very serious mistake; but the very effort to grasp in some measure the Trinity will perfect our knowledge of the Trinity and give us a most exalted idea thereof; so that soaring aloft on the wings of the morning we may contemplate the very essence of the eternal majesty of Him Who reigns for everlasting; Who has made all things, without Whom has been made nothing that has been made. When we thus raising our minds contemplate the nature of God the Father we come to love that image of Him which constitutes the Son and when we have formed some idea of the Father and of the Son and the mutual love and eternal effluence that flows from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the Father as from one principle we come to understand some of the inner workings of the Divine Trinity; so that by even our poor efforts we are enabled to love God as Son in the Son and to love the Son as Son in the Father and to love the Holy Ghost Who is the mutual

and the personal expression of the Father for the Son and of the Son for the Father.

I do not think that I need go farther on this subject in commemoration of this glorious day, the day on which we celebrate the existence of the divine Trinity. We had better conclude with the words of the glorious Te Deum written by St. Augustine and St. Ambrose:

We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord,
All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting.
To Thee all angels cry aloud; the heavens and all the powers therein.
To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry,
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth,
Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.
The glorious company of the apostles praise Thee.
The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise Thee.
The Holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee,

The father of an Infinite Majesty;
Thine adorable, true and only Son;
Also the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.
Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ.
Thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father.
When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man,
Thou didst not abhor the virgin's womb.
When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death,
Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
Thou sittest at the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father.
We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge.
We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants,
Whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood;
Make them to be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting.
O Lord, save Thy people and bless Thine heritage.
Govern them and lift them up forever.
Day by day we magnify Thee;
And we worship Thy name ever, world without end.
Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us! have mercy upon us!
O Lord, let Thy mercy lighten upon us, as our trust is in Thee.
O Lord, in Thee have I trusted; let me never be confounded.

I have done my best to adumbrate the glory, and to delineate some conception of the Blessed Trinity, or the profound mystery of God, one in nature and three in its natural, mutual and personal relations. No one can be more painfully conscious of how far I have fallen short of what we would wish to bring home to our minds and hearts. The One God Trinoque in His personals.

This is, indeed, the symbol and undying truth which we are taught on this day dedicated to the Holy Trinity. In our efforts we have searched creation and in all God's works we have found faint symbols which seem to image forth this august mystery.

We have found such suggestions everywhere. For everywhere God seems to have formed semblances of His mysterious nature and its impenetrable attributes. We adore Thee, O God, because we discern Thy finger-prints everywhere, not less in the least than

in the greatest of Thy works. We worship Thee with the loftiest praise and supremest honor, and exclaim praise, honor and glory, eternal and forevermore, to Thee and confess Thee the Father everlasting, the adorable, true and unutterable glory incarnate. Thou art Three in One and One in Three, indissoluble and everlasting. Glory in the midst of glorification.

We have found the shadow of Thy personal relations in the depth, height and breadth of everything that can be measured and in all the human mind is capable of discerning. Whether we ascend or descend or penetrate or soar aloft or sink into the abyss Thou art the true and everlasting God.

We have reached the recesses of the human mind—its will, memory and understanding—and we would fain imagine that in this being we perceive some suggestion of the divine Persons issuing from one another.

We soar to the bosom of God and in the vision we get another and greater insight into the inner procession of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. For this mutual love and coextensive regard of these Persons constitute the inner and eternal life of God—the image

of all life, whether on earth, or under the earth or as filling all space and time.

It was in the names or nature of the Godhead designated by nomenclature of the three Persons that Jesus sent the apostles into the world to teach all men; baptizing them by the sacraments—the perennial sources of grace and light—to know the truth, confirming them in the name of one nature and one water and one Holy Ghost, and by the personal presence of the Three. Go ye therefore into the whole world; your work shall last forever, even to the end.

Besides the incarnation of Christ in the Church, where He has taken His abode as the soul takes possession of the body, the Holy Ghost, on Pentecost, entered into the corporate body of the Church, and into the souls of men, to guide them, and to illume the Church and to teach it all that Christ sought to make known to the world forevermore.

In every atom of matter, in every grain or particle, be it insignificant for its size or gigantic for its magnitude, exceeding all calculation for its weight or past conception for its bulk or ponderousness, there is invested in it that which preserves it, which enables it to re-

sist all hostile enemies—a certain irresistibility and power of resistance which conserves it in existence, which defies all foreign force and routs all foreign foes. Some will call it an inherent grandeur or an irresistible virtue that makes it the potential master of itself and continues it forever in existence. Some will call it a centripetal or centrifugal power which is the power of the omnipotence of the Most High.

The world may be likened to the external development of the Trinity; the Trinity may be termed the internal Trinity. One infinite from within; the other infinite from without. The inner life of God is the Trinity; the outer life is the physical world around us.

We have no adequate conception of the size and weight and solidity of even the atom that we call earth, which is one of the smallest bodies that roll in space through the vast empyrean to which our globe is as nothing. Calculation would seem almost impossible to gauge or weigh the tremendous size, the illimitable weight, the uncounted limit that would go to constitute the squares of the distances or the solidity of the cubes of our little globe. Much greater would be the weight and solidity of the countless globes with which astronomy and

science make it known. It is demonstrable that thirty figures would be scarcely sufficient, in other words quadrillions, to declare the number of tons and the size of these worlds; but how much greater if all these worlds should coalesce together and form a weight that only can be declared by saying as we do that a vast collection of units as I have just indicated is to be declared the inconceivable weight of a few globes, how much more inconceivable the weight of all globes moulded into one? We cannot tell how long the world may be sufficient to support human life, nor do we know that human life will run out and become extinct when the solid mass of the earth dwindles away and is but as nothing to the uncounted populations that have filled and that shall fill this earth before the race of man is extinct. With these stupendous considerations before our minds we cannot but fall prostrate before the adorable Trinity Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whose illimitable power and incredible magnitude so far surpasses all our comprehension.

This is the power that holds the world and matter together. Without it matter would resolve into its atoms and cease to be. By its virtue it coalesces and stands firm in its com-

ponent elements. No power short of annihilation can resolve it into fragments. The mighty force that holds the world together holds also the particles that are unified and made uniform or one. Not stronger than the pillars that sustain the heavens are the forces that make particles as if they were one.

This is called by some an energy or activity which is exhausted on itself. The external activity is consumed on itself without losing anything of its innate virtue; while the internal activity may be in some measure likened to the inner life of the Trinity which is employed without losing anything from its essential or innate activity.

This is the illustration which St. Thomas employs to unfold to us the inner life and activity of the Godhead.

Whence comes this inherent and essential vitality or vis of resistance or vis of self-continuation by which it maintains itself in being and defies all efforts made for its destruction? Is it the centrifugal or centripetal forces that unite and hold in one all the elements that constitute this substantial being and sustain the whole world's system of universal unity and support and steady in the laws that govern all bodies and systems of bodies; governing them

and holding them firm in that unceasing order and harmony whose voice is the voice of God and which is in the bosom of God and constitutes the esesntial and even-accented harmony of all the works of the everlasting God? And of all nature throughout all the realms of space and all the possibilities of existence? Does the essential activity of all the works of the Creator come from the power which He has written upon them or does it spring from their intrinsic natures—an endowment of the virtue and activity which comes from their nature which the great God has bestowed upon them? No material substance can claim as its own what does not necessarily and inherently belong to it. All the laws of nature are given gratuitously, not because they are its gift and that they can exact them as in and by their own right.

The activity which I have sought to explain is commensurate with the measure and weight and height and depth, and all possible limits, which God has made its own, and is as truly matter as the soul, a spiritual substance, is truly spirit. But who can fathom the unfathomable or comprehend the incomprehensible or explore the unexplorable in the crea-

tions of the Almighty? Thus would St. Thomas expound the Trinity.

Hymn

O Thou Eternal Source of Love!
Ruler of Nature's scheme!
In Substance One, in Persons Three!
Omniscient and Supreme!

O be Thou near us when we wake!
And at the break of day,
With Thy blest touch arouse the soul,
Her meed of praise to pay.

To God the Father glory be,
And Sole, Eternal Son;
And Glory, Holy Ghost, to Thee,
While endless ages run. Amen.

* * * * * * * *

O Thou who dost all nature sway
Dread Trinity in Unity!
Accept the trembling praise we pay
To Thy Eternal Majesty!

The star that heralds in the morn
Is fading in the skies;
The darkness melts; O Thou, True Light.
Once more on us arise!

To God the Father glory be;
And Sole, Eternal Son;
All glory, Holy Ghost, to Thee,
While endless ages run. Amen.

Trinity Sunday

On this blessed day we illustrate the august mystery of the Adorable Trinity: Three Persons, one in nature, three in the supreme relations which we designate a Person: One in nature, in substance, in divinity of Persons; in which when we speak of nature we mean in the name of, implying oneness of nature; while the use of the three names would indicate singularity of nature which distinguishes them into persons or independent relations one in its supreme singularity of nature and the threefold relations of Father, Who gives generation to the Son, from which mutual regard and co-eternal love proceeds the Holy Ghost Who is the eternal Spiration or breathing forth of the Father on the Son and the reciprocal love of the Son for the Father.

The apostles were to teach all men baptizing them in the three names which is the same as nature of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Under this sublime title and lofty dedication we are all to be made the children of God and sons of the Most High. John had

baptized, but in water. It was reserved for Him whose forerunner John was to baptize in water and the Holy Ghost. In this solemn investiture even Jesus had himself baptized and declared the Son of God. John may have thought that he rather than Jesus should be purified by the grace of the Living God; but Jesus thought otherwise, saying that thus it behooveth the Son of Man. He commanded John to suffer it for so it was necessary to fulfill all justice. And as Jesus came forth from the water, the Spirit of God was seen ascending and descending. And the voice of God was heard from the clouds, This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him. Those who had only known of John's baptism stood around in amazement as they saw the wondrous works of the Most High.

God being the Creator of all things is the divine Artificer and the Model upon which all the works of His hands are imaged. Let Us make man to Our Own likeness was the confidential wisdom upon which the Triune God proceeded to work when He undertook the creation of human beings. Then and at all times since, all things that He has made have been made in His Exemplar.

As the Trinity is the internal expression of

the divine nature, all the works of God must image forth some resemblance to this august mystery. Hence we say that all the divine works in some sense or degree resemble God. Feeble though it may be the resemblance is indeed a true verisimilitude.

All things proclaim this likeness, the will, memory and understanding, these threefold powers in which we find our natural sovereignty shadowed forth in our lofty but imperfect conception, assume its divine likeness.

In discoursing on these sublime truths, we must be careful not to rush in where angels fear to tread; yet under the inspiratory lessons of holy scripture, with prophets and apostles to guide and admonish us we scarce have need of caution, with the masterly lights of angelic theologies, and the studies and reflections of those who have undertaken to lead along our perilous path, we cannot fail to be filled with holy and wholesome lessons to guide us and admonish us through the dark and rugged tracks which learned traditions have unfolded for our intelligence, so that what is difficult or perplexing soon becomes a pleasure and profound study.

If we look within us or around us and seek to find an image of the Trinity, we find our

best and truest operations in the human mind, with its varied powers of reflection, its memory or faculty of reminiscence, and the will with its varied and marvellous works.

If before coming to this world within us, we contemplate all that nature gives us of a similar likeness, the power by which we recall the past, pass on to love or reject it, or the faculty by which we see God within us, we learn something of this wondrous mystery.

But if before coming to these varied aspects we want to form our highest and truest conception, we must consider the nature of matter or spirit or what has been designated the actual activity or innate substance of which all things and nature have been endowed. This inherent activity or vis is the very substance of all things. By it it preserves. It has been well defined as the very activity or natural cohesiveness in which and by which all atoms of matter coalesce and affect and hold matter in its magic power and unceasing energy.

In proportion to the age and magnitude of matter is the power which it exerts for retraction or repulsion, and the centripetal and centrifugal forces of matter, and sustains all objects at their respective distances and nearnesses in the universe of God, and the proper

and necessary placing of all bodies, great and small, proximate and remote, animate or inanimate.

All the sacrifices and sacraments of the Old Law, all the sacrifices and sacraments of the New Law, all the merits of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, all the graces purchased for us by the blood of Jesus Christ, all the Redemption He has wrought by His sufferings and death and resurrection for our justification,—all come and have issued from the side of Jesus on the Cross from the sacred invocation—I baptize Thee and absolve Thee and sanctify Thee in the name of the august Trinity; I baptize Thee and love Thee in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost,—God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost; for this sacred name attests to and confirms us in the way of salvation. To and from this divine Trinity comes all power and grace and salvation now and forevermore, Amen, in saecula, saeculorum.

The Trinity was invoked in the creation; the Trinity was importuned at the Redemption; the Trinity was the name by which the world was converted; by It it was baptized; by which salvation became the inheritance of all men. For the Trinity's honor and glory the world

was created and sent on its broad and everlasting career to last till time shall be no more, and the angels of God shall go forth to sing their loud and long hosannas. Thee, O God we praise the Father of Everlasting Majesty; the admirable true and Only Son; the everlasting Paraclete: to the undiminished glory of the Triune God and the Saviour Jesus Christ; therefore shall we praise, and glorify Thee forevermore in all the ages, world without end, Amen.

Every substance is endowed with relations which invest it with characteristics, of a kin to personality, or if not endowed with consciousness yet assumes the supposita which go to form or cultivate a complex substance or adequate being. Height, breadth, width, depths, altitude, profundity. St. Paul exhausts these personalities when he asks, What shall separate me from Christ? Shall hunger, thirst, nakedness? No, he continues, I am convinced that neither height nor depth nor breadth nor things past or present or to come can separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

I stretch out my hand into space. At once I am met with or encounter manifold or indefinite space with its completed substantial

multiple relations, personal in all save consciousness or rationability. And this phenomenon may be found everywhere in every part and place even the least no less than in the greatest of God's creations or boundless domain. For essences or natures do not depend upon magnitude nor are they measured out by extension.

Of all the illustrations which nature supplies to declare to us the nature of the Trinity there is none so clear and intelligible and capable of bringing home to the mind the mighty and transcendent truth, and of course without exhausting or exploring the divine secrets contained in this threefold procession of the three Persons from and in the one God and His perfect nature, there is nothing with which we are more familiar than the workings of the human mind as a type of the Trinity. This image is born of the Trinity; or this working gives us some comprehension of the nature of God and the three divine Persons which constitute His being.

Contemplating any subject or object which presents itself to the intelligence we naturally form an idea or conception of such subject. From this conception we pass on to love or

reject it as satisfactory or unsatisfactory to the mind. This rejection is fatal to our conception. If, on the other hand, far from comprehending this idea we are pleased with the objected subject, we seek to embrace it and make it our own. In other words, from this mental love or co-eternal regard which we cherish for what we love, or for whatever is dissonant to our desires, we no longer have the love and absorbing feelings for this objected subject. Such is the natural working of will, memory and understanding; such are the operations of the soul at once voluntary, intellectual, nolens or reluctance, and all-powerful and everlasting and inexhaustible.

Far be it from us to attempt to solve the unsolvable or to rush in where angels fear to tread. It is only our desire to adore still more the adorable Trinity and from this greater knowledge to rise into some faint idea of the ineffable and unutterable comprehension, though inadequate, of the sovereign Lord and His inconceivable attributes. Nor do we believe that our conception will be at all blemished or impaired by this pious exaltation which can only have the effect of raising us still higher and nearer to the bosom of God. As St. John

was transported to the highest heavens or St. Paul, whether in the body or out of the body, was elevated to the third heaven and heard words and saw things which it was not given to man to comprehend.

The nature of the three divine Persons may be probably better shown not so much by such illustrations, but rather by lifting our souls aloft and contemplating the Trinity as consisting of one God and the three august Persons in themselves and as in the eternal procession by thirds and through which the Eternal Father by Eternal Generation gives birth to the Son; and the Eternal Spiration by which and through which the Holy Ghost is spirated from the Father and the Son as from one principle. Thus let it be.

The Father from everlasting knows Himself and is filled with consciousness of Himself and His nature and infinite attributes: His eternity, His oneness, His omniscience, His omnipotence. The indefectibility and oneness of His nature and sovereign perfection and all other perfections. This consciousness or idea is Himself as expressed or imaged forth by the Word or Logos that expresses the divine Son. From this image of the Father He is generated

in the Son, and from the love which subsists between them—and from the mutual love and coeternal regard thus subsisting proceeds the Holy Ghost as from One eternal principle.

Thus the cycle of the Trinity is rounded off and completed and made of one nature with the threefold Persons—all equally eternal, all equally powerful, all equally wise, just and forever the same in substance except in the relations of paternity, or that, in other words, one is not the other; although all possessing the same identical nature and are but the one God, unfailing and everlasting. Oh! altitude of altitudes. Oh, depth of depths; Oh, omniscience of omnisciences. Oh! almighty of almightiness. To thy name and nature be supreme honor and worship and glory forevermore.

Hymn

Today the Blessed Three in One
Began the earth and skies;
Today a Conqueror, God the Son,
Did from the grave arise;
We too will wake, and, in despite
Of sloth and langor, all unite,
As Psalmists bid, through the dim night,
Waiting with wistful eyes.

So may He hear, and heed each vow
And prayer to Him addrest
And grant an instant cleansing now,
A future glorious rest.
So may He plentifully shower,
On all who hymn His love and power
In this most still and sacred hour,
His sweetest gifts and best.

Father of purity and light!
Thy presence if we win,
'Twill shield us from the deeds of night
The burning darts of sin;
Lest aught defiled or dissolute
Relax our bodies or imbrute,
And fires eternal be the fruit
Of fire now lit within.

Fix in our hearts, Redeemer dear,
The ever-gushing spring
Of grace to cleanse, of life to cheer
Souls sick and sorrowing.
Thee, bounteous Father, we entreat,
And Only Son, awful and sweet,
And life-creating Paraclete,
The everlasting King.

(Newman.)

"The works that I do give testimony of Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me."

The soul is the very superscription of God; it is made by God and is the likeness of God. It is the image of God by its three-fold attributes—will, memory and understanding—modelled on His very nature; it is indeed far removed from the essentials of God, yet in its remoteness, and nearness, suggestive of Him.

We find in our inmost recesses an inherent and irresistible longing and tendency to our bliss and beatitude. For this we feel that we have been made. As the eye is made to see and the ear to hear and the heart to love with sovereign bliss, as every pulsation of that faithful organ would lead us to and interne us in its bounds, so, similarly, we feel that we are made for union with the sovereign good from which we came and to which we must tend if we wish to be happy.

Yet we know that our simple and spiritual souls can never find this beatitude here below; thus we are forced to seek it wherever we can find it; and if not here in this world we must

look beyond the veils of time and find it in eternity. We will cheerfully pass through the waters and the fires and the pains of our transition state, our state of pregnancy, to possess all that we crave and seek in the life to come after this.

It is, indeed, the divinity within us that points out our hereafter. The dagger, says the poet, in a moment brings me to an end; but this word of God informs me that I shall never die. It is the hope against dying, or, more correctly, the hope of rising from the dead, that animates and consoles and cheers me and fills me with hope and unfailing bliss. It springs eternal in the human heart.

"Show us the Father and it will be sufficient for us," said Philip to Christ. "So long a time hast Thou been with us." "And sayest thou, Philip, show us the Father? He Who seest Me seest the Father; for the Father is in Me and I in the Father. The works that I do show that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me. If thou believest not Me believe the works that I do, for they give testimony that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me. If I had not done works greater than all others, they would be without sin, but as I have done works greater than all others, their sin re-

maineth. The works themselves give testimony of Me."

The supreme guarantee and unfailing foundation of our faith is the word of Christ; the same yesterday, today and forever, and like the God that gave, its greatness is from generation to generation and it is as eternal and indefeasible and infallible as God Himself.

Many are the lines of argument that can be evoked to manifest the divinity of Christ and His doctrine. Chief among them, as I have already intimated, are His miracles by which He clearly shows that He is God sent into the world to teach men and to impart to them the graces and blessings of salvation. But of this enough for the present. Next comes the prophecy uttered from the hour when on the fall of man God promised him a Redeemer. And these prophecies continued down all the ages from Adam to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to Daniel, to Isaiah, especially that four hundred and seventy weeks of years from the going forth of the decree to build Jerusalem to the slaughter of Christ in the middle of the last week of His passion and death. However, I do not purpose to dwell upon these mighty truths but rather to indicate in a cursory way

what readily can be adduced to show the divinity of Christ and His Messiahship among men.

The personal character of Christ is vouched for by His words, "Who shall accuse Me of sin?" And His solemn announcement that He is in the Father and the Father in Him; that is His divine word, that He was indeed the Son of God. Not less than the influence of His name before His advent and since; Name so sacred that the holy invoke it and the wicked swear by it as the holiest of all objects which they know of.

The wonderful adaptibility of His teaching to the needs and demands of human nature, its divine development according to the exigency of the truth and the sovereign needs of the children of men, and the spread of Christianity notwithstanding its character, so abhorrent to and at variance with human passions, so mysterious to man's nature and limited intelligence proves this. Thus we might continue to dilate upon the varied array of argumentations which are producible and easily at hand to evince the absolute demonstration of the teachings of Christ as reacting upon the solid and impregnable rock of His everlasting word which can never deceive nor be deceived, and which has formed the basis of the gospel's

spread and existence from the time of Christ down to the present time. But we must forbear, having mentioned the invincible argument afforded by the testimony sealed in the blood of the countless army of martyrs who in every age have given the most solemn and irrefragible and unanswerable argument to the enemies of Christ, and given as strong a proof as even the conversion of St. Paul, who, thirty-three years after Christ, was struck down by the Lord on his course to Damascus.

But we shall confine ourselves to the subject of miracles as the supreme proof which Christ has given us according to His words, the works which I do give proof: "If you believe not Me, believe the works which I do, for they give testimony of Me and show that the Father and I are one." And here it should be borne in mind that the testimony of one martyr is as convincing as that of a multitude, all being guided by the same impulse. And yet in the midst of persecutions unto death myriads of saints and martyrs have resolutely laid down their lives and shed their blood to seal their faith in Christ and His gospel. Nor did they reckon that the price was too great for such divine, heaven-inspired heroism. Even those not summoned to die, overcome by the example

of those dying before them, have voluntarily rushed into the embrace of death, thus attesting their belief.

Christ had professed to have been superior to all law and master of nature itself. The new testament is little else than the record of His acts, showing His authority over all things and His power of working miracles and achieving the impossible; the type of omnipotence. Since then the world's history has shown the reasonableness of our faith as resting upon His word and power. And all this not only before, but during and since Christ came upon earth. It was no less the revelation of the Eternal Father to all the sons of men than it was "Not flesh and blood" that led to Peter's professed faith in Christ's divinity and Messiahship.

Hence, therefore, we presume to select the subject of miracles for our discourse to-day. Nor should this lessen the value we put upon miracles. Indeed the simplest, shortest, most decisive proof of Christ's divinity is prophecy, for in it we have the record of all that concerns Him. And we have but to look upon the page of history for its verification. Thus the fact verifies the foresight and future as revealed to the prophets and all who have gone before us.

It was because of such miracles that Christ wrought that we find evidence in His day and since. It was Nicodemus who said to Him: "Master, we know that You come from God, because no one could do the works that you do if God were not." John III, 2.

Startling the fact that the world has been converted to Christ! It must have been through miracles that such a conversion was effected. For if done without miracles such a transformation would itself have been the greatest of all miracles. Or as St. Thomas said: It would be the greatest miracle of all if the world had been induced to believe what is so unimaginable, to do what is so hard, to hope for that which is so exalted without miracles or supernatural signs on the mere affirmation of a few illiterates. Con. Gentes. v. i. C. vi. Such enthusiasm for such a religion must have come from the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of mankind.

It must have been a divine impulse that led millions to such a change of heart and mind. And this divine impulse must have been no less powerful if it told on and converted even one no less than if it converted all men and the whole world. The spirit that converted the apostles was the spirit that through them con-

verted the world, and impelled them to die and endure martyrdom, under its most hideous forms, for Christ, thus sealing their faith with blood and self-sacrifice.

Miracles in General

Miracles, prodigies, signs are events that go beyond the power of natural causes. There may be a slight difference in the meaning of the words, but they are substantially the same. Sometimes called wonders, but thus used it refers rather to the surprise or interest aroused by the thing wrought. Miracles indicate the hand or presence and power of God. Wrought in His Name, they are seals or vouchers of those divinely sent, or of the truth which they make known.

The power of God is shown in the natural laws which govern all things. But He also manifests His power not less, but if anything even more by the suspension of these laws, and in his suspension principally consists a miracle. In other words, the suspension, no less than the sustainment of the law proclaims His power. These laws are the uniform mode of existence which God in His power has conferred upon them. They do not belong nor are they inherent in nature of itself. The power of God is necessary, no less after nature created, than

it was to produce nature: the upholding or conservation of all things is a continued creation and calls for creative power. Things were not created, and then left to take care of themselves; creation and conservation alike are of the power of God the Creator, and no less the Sustainer. There is, therefore, nothing to hinder God from transcending His own laws, and producing effects which the ordinary causes, sustained by Himself, cannot produce. Or, He can invest these natural causes with new virtue and augmented power. Nature itself, of course, is only the conservation and sustained work of God.

St. Thomas defines a miracle as a fact "beyond the power of all created nature." It is not merely against a particular law, but against the whole power of all created nature. There are some facts or effects which would be against a law when the law would be viewed by itself; but another law comes to its aid, and the effect ceases to be a miracle. Some miracles are such because the fact in its substance would be against all created nature. Some are miracles because of the subject in which the miracle is wrought. Some are miraculous because of the manner in which the miracle is wrought. The sun dial in Schaz, the resur-

rection of Lazarus, the cure of Peter's mother-in-law, are respectively instances.

God alone can work miracles, according to the definition. Angels are said to work miracles. If so, it is because God employs them as His instruments. For their power does not exceed the power of nature: hence their works do not transcend the power or capacity of all created nature. However, if we could imagine an angel to work a miracle, we are sure that the angel would not work it in defiance of God, or against His will; and only because God so desired it, and because it would be for sake of good, and never for sake of evil. And thus wrought, the miracle would be truly the work of God Himself. Hence no marvellous work of an angel can ever authenticate any but what is moral, praiseworthy, and worthy of God and useful to men.

As to lying wonders effected by the devil, they are not miracles; and means will never be wanting in God's providence, by which they may be discerned, lest men be led into error. The nature and faculties of these spirits are far beyond ours, and our knowledge of them; hence they may easily accomplish wonders, far beyond what we may know, and we may take them for miracles, the counterfeit for the

genuine. The Anti-christ, we are told will work wonders that will impose upon men so far as to deceive, if it were possible, even the elect. Among men are found those who delude and lead astray others, because of the knowledge which the former attain; so, also, evil spirits by dark dissimulation and tremendous energy can delude men and even appear as angels of light.

Grace is given gratuitously for working miracles that the word preached or answered may be confirmed and made believable by miracles; and the Holy Ghost sufficiently provides for the church in those things that are useful for salvation; such are graces gratis given. And thus by supernatural effects; that is, by miracles, man is led to some supernatural knowledge of things to be believed.

The principle of working miracles is not a quality habitual in the soul; because it would not extend itself to all the supernatural things which can be done; but it is God Who principally works. Also, what things are done by the devil are not true miracles, because they are done by virtue of natural causes, although to us they seem true miracles. Likewise, the grace of cures, besides the common benefit which is shown in all miracles; to wit, that men

may be led into the knowledge of God, confers something particular on man; that is, soundness or health; accordingly, it is mentioned alone. Likewise, the working of miracles is ascribed to faith, because it is for the manifestation of faith, and because it proceeds from the omnipotence of God, upon which faith depends.

We have done little else than transcribe St. Thomas.

"All that is not of faith is of conscience."

There shall be signs in the sun and moon; there shall be two distinct periods in the judicial character of Christ; one when He assumed our flesh and became man; the other when He shall come on the day of judgment to judge all men.

It may be asked why, in addition to the particular judgment at the hour of death there should be another judgment on the last day before the whole world. Many are the reasons which can be adduced for these marvelous occurrences (II Book of Numbers). Parents leave behind them their children and their descendants to whom they are misrepresented and discredited before men to justify the ways of God to man among whom the wicked prosper and the just are allowed to suffer. But such a lot for the one and such bliss for the other will be accounted for on that day big with the fate of man's eternal interest trembling in the balance. However, the body and soul work together and are mu-

tual sharers of their virtues or vices. The one shall be partaker in the merits or demerits of the other: the awards and punishments are justly assigned before the congregated assembly gathered in the valley of Jehosaphat whither all the children of men will hasten at the summons of the angels, at the command of Jesus Christ, one Person with two natures; a God and man. God from everlasting, before all ages; as man born of the Virgin Mary, made up of body and soul yet in the one Person of God the Son. The divinity of Christ is the foundation of religion, of faith, of hope and of charity.

We read that there shall be signs in the sun, moon and stars; the earth will be convulsed, the sun will be darkened, the moon turned to blood; Christ will come seated upon a great tribunal for the purpose of holding this solemn assize. With all this we are familiar. These have been given to us by our Lord in order to give us the external expression of that which we know of during our life from the moment of our first observance of or neglect of the law of Christ.

The day shall come when those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and they shall arise, many unto eternal

reward, and many to an eternal shame and misery.

Now, then, to bring these remarks to a very practical conclusion:

What are we to think—what is to be our destiny? Shall we receive a favorable decision or shall we be condemned by that which will express the anger of God?

We are, in this congregation, probably 2,000 people. Shall we all be saved? Shall even one-half of us be saved—shall even two-thirds or three-quarters of us be saved—shall even one hundred be saved—shall even fifty be saved? If, at this moment, Jesus Christ should come into this church to judge the world, and should appear in the midst of this assembly, how many of us would He find to place among the lambs at His right hand, or how many would be placed among the goats at His left. We cannot say. All we know is that instead of looking forward to what may be in store for us at the hour of death or in the hour of the general judgment, we must consider that which is actually before us in the hour when conscience is imperilled and when we are moved to sin or induced to practice virtue.

We read much in Holy Scripture of Christ coming to judge the world, and it is true, for

when asked if He were the Son of God He declared: "Amen, I say to you, I am; and you shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of glory with great power and majesty to judge the living and the dead." We also are informed that He will send His angel St. Michael before His face to render justice to all men; but these external signs will be but the manifestations of that which conscience has already made known to us with unerring instinct and most enlightened intelligence.

This general judgment will be useful in order that all men may see that which no one knows, but the one upon whom sentence has been passed.

Many seem to act as if their trial was away off—far removed in the future; while it may be true that the formal manifestation of conscience is thus hidden, still by looking into ourselves we, beyond any mistake, can know what the judgment of God will be. It will not require any elaborate investigation, for with one glance God will see all our thoughts and words and actions and will but repeat the approbation or condemnation which He has already passed upon us at the close of life.

Some may ask, "Are these truths really so?" Manifestly, because they are founded upon

and are the external expression of the law of conscience which has furnished the burden of my discourse and discussion, and as the law of conscience cannot be questioned for a moment, so the external expression of this conscience cannot for a moment be called in doubt. Sufficient for us to thoroughly realize that the law of conscience is that which is the very essence of our judgment, particular and general, and the rewards and punishments which will be assigned by Almighty God upon every one according as he shall have done, good or evil, in this life.

Yet we have the most explicit statements which are meant to bring home to the human heart the fearful character of the issues that follow upon the observance or the violation of the law of conscience.

You believe in God: faith without works is dead—faith profits nothing but the remorse of our wrongdoing. Is your faith a realizing faith that works by charity? The devils believe and tremble and yet are not saved. Your rational assent to the truth avails not. Do you hear the roars of the damned, the clanging of their chains that hold them down; do you see the smoke of their torments ascending forever

and ever; do you hear the cries of despair; do you hear those infuriated yells sufficient to tear hell's concave; do you invoke the aid to annihilate them or put an end to their misery, or send a glass of water to quench their thirst, and mitigate their wretched plight and consuming thirst?

Christ died for our sins. Doest thou abhor the sins which brought Christ from heaven and nailed Him to the Cross; the blood that drenched Calvary, the blood of every age shed by martyrs from the beginning till now, from the blood of Cain to the blood of Zachariah whom your fathers slew between the temple and the altar, not to speak of the bloodshedding in every age and clime to wash this sin-stained earth?

We believe or we say that we believe in a future life! Does your faith enable you to see this future life, or to feel that it is a reality, or is not your belief but a mere dream that passes away, as all dreams do with the ushering in of the morning light? As the sun obscures the visible world because of its overwhelming light, so the reality of the physical world hinders us from realizing the stupendous truths made known to us by the word of God,

and the repetition of the Gospel that has grown trite, so that we neither hear with the ear or see with the eye, or understand with the heart.

Think not that by saying Lord, Lord, we shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. For it is only by obedience to conscience, the voice of God, that we may hope for this everlasting reward and escape from the everlasting perdition. Conscience is the light burning in our souls to illuminate their darkness and to guide them along the road to salvation. Fidelity to conscience during life, and at death, and at judgment is the soverign means by which we cherish this light which enlightens the soul and mind and whole being.

God wills Himself as the supreme end of all, and all other things as the means thereto. In God there must be this true will. Not from necessity, but freely does God wish all that He wishes. God works all things by the counsel of His will. (Ephr. 1:II.) The will of God is the cause of all things. The will of God is always fulfilled. The will of God is always immutable. Nor is God as man that He should die, nor as the soul of man that He should change. (Numbers 23-19.) The divine will imposes necessity upon something wished, but not on all. God by no means wishes the evil

of sin. But evil may be the natural defect, and sometimes He wishes the evil of punishment. God has free will. (St. Thomas, p. 44.)

God is the all-knowing and all-powerful Provider. The will of God rules all things, angels, men and all other creatures whether material, destitute of life, or animated by life, or instinct or reason. He can permit what in the first instance may seem to contravene His will, but it will soon be seen that even that is ordained by Him, and tends to His divine purpose: it may be permitted for His wisdom and that other and greater good may result. If it does not manifest His love, it manifests His justice and thus redounds to His glory. Nothing therefore can happen against His will. For all things happen within His knowledge, and nothing can oppose His providence. God's power is equal to His wisdom, and His wisdom is infinite, as His nature. Nothing can go beyond or escape His control and providence.

The law is from the divine intellect contemplating the divine essence. It is therefore not arbitrary, but is because it must be from the very nature of God.

The divine will follows the divine mind.

The divine light guides all the works of God;

nothing is the result of fate or blind instinct. The voice of God throughout the universe and all the worlds that God has made, is the harmony of the world, the bosom of God is the seat whence all creatures are ruled. Angels fall before Him and tremble at His presence; men should obey the dictates of their rational nature; creations in the heavens by their wondrous movements and revolutions; animals by the very instinct of their being.

To men and angels He gives free will; in its exercise they glorify God or in its abuse bring upon themselves His eternal curse. By divine grace they are enabled to achieve their eternal destiny; by its abuse they forfeit eternal bliss, but not their eternal duration, which continues in union with God, or in separation from Him; that is, in everlasting bliss or everlasting woe.

The sentence will be pronounced before all men and in the presence of the Judge who will not fail to exact justice and avenge wickedness. Not even in heaven or on earth could more be effected for the pursuit of virtue and the shunning of crime than the awful spectacle described in the Dies Irae. For the particular judgment is in secret and unknown till that great assize. This judgment will serve

to explain the course of providence. Although judgment is exercised by Him in Whose hands God has left all judgment, yet it is proper to the Three Persons, but to the Son necessarily because of His divine wisdom and His prerogative of judging the world.

Various signs shall precede: The gospel shall be preached everywhere; faith shall have grown faint or been obliterated; the anti-Christ shall have put in his appearance. Great signs in the heavens, great distress of the nations, the world convulsed. A new order shall arise on the ruins of the present world.

"Come ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you. Depart ye accursed into your proper abode with the accursed angels and the reprobate souls of men." Nothing is more salutary than to be frequently reminded of judgment and the fear of God which it inspires and pursues.

Holy Scripture informs us that in that day our conscience will be our worst accuser: with thought accusing and condemning one another: but we need not look ahead as to our conscience on that day; it is sufficient for us to consider the working of this conscience while in this life and to understand and realize that conscience as a foundation for judgment, both

particular and general, and for the reward and punishments that will follow the condemnation or approbation of our consciences.

It is not at all difficult to define what is meant by conscience: it is the approval or disapproval of our souls for any thought, word, or deed that may be proposed to us and that may become, a subject of trial; that knowledge of the intellect which enables us to see what is good or what is bad in the hour of trial and temptation.

As I have intimated the law of conscience lies at the very foundation of the particular and, of course, at the foundation of the general judgment, both of which are virtually the same; for the general judgment will not alter the particular, and will leave things at that hour as they are left at the hour of our death.

We are conscious in our souls of the various laws which God has written in our hearts—the divine law, the natural law, the law of faith, of hope, of charity, of purity, of justice, and all those other dictates which rise in our minds when we contemplate the alternatives of keeping these laws or of violating them.

We have no need ever to ask ourselves what manner of judgment will be ours at the hour of death, and still less what will be the judg-

ment in the last day—because our consciences will accuse us or condemn us according as we may do.

If we listen to the dictates of our conscience, we realize that these various laws are the very voice of God speaking in the inmost recesses of our consciences. All we need is to give ear to their warnings or to the awards which they promise us or the consequences which they threaten us with.

The essence of conscience in its foundation is these laws as made known to us by God speaking in our hearts. We need not then go further than to inquire what are these laws and how faithful are we in keeping them or in avoiding their violation.

The general idea of the foundation of conscience is simply the eternal truth as made known to us by these laws as the voice of God. When we apply this to our daily life and ask ourselves whether something proposed be in accordance with or contrary to these laws we have the practical conclusion that constitutes what is the law of conscience.

The law which forms conscience in the individual is one with the law which forms conscience in society. Conscience in society and in the human race at large is simply the multi-

plication of the one voice of conscience that speaks in every one's heart. The one is the individual conscience; the other is simply the same individual conscience but multiplied according to the number of persons to whom it is applied.

In every case and under all circumstances we know that there is a wrong to be shunned and a right to be sought. When we comprehend the variance between our actions and these various laws, we must know that we incur the displeasure of God. We find it in the regret, and disappointment, and dissatisfaction which we experience in our souls. When we find nothing but accord and correspondence between these various laws in our actions, we know that we are faithful to God's law and this fidelity is made known to us by the feeling of conscience and satisfaction and self-approval that we experience in our inmost hearts.

The law of conscience then will be the standard by which we shall be judged at the hour of our death, and as the same law applies to all the multitude of men, so likewise, at the last day before the great assize which Christ will hold; the law of conscience runs through all and enlightens and gives meaning to them all.

We need never bother ourselves in our eagerness to know the result of our trial, for, in any case, our conscience shall have already told us. Thoughts accusing or condemning and holding us in subjection to these great laws of which we are the subjects, and every man and woman and child born into the world. Conscience is the law of God within our hearts, the beacon light which alone we can trust, and which we must blindly follow and obey in spite of all other directors and guides.

True faith must necessarily be productive of good works, as seed must germinate in good fruit and salutary offspring. This principle may exist, and yet it may never express itself in practice, and it may never exert itself in execution. Good works are animated by faith: good works must accompany faith; good works must be the legitimate resultant from faith; all good works, to be such, must reside in the intention and be the embodiment of faith. The desire of being justified can never accomplish salvation, or what constitutes salvation.

This is the road to heaven. This, the way to hell.

Innocence preserved or innocence recovered and retained is the sure and only road to heaven. The path to Calvary, the royal road

of the cross, which few tread, and which all with any pretence to salvation and which those who seek salvation must pursue or be irretrievably lost. But it is the broad way which the multitude press into without seriously giving thought to the imminent break and inexhaustible gulf of perdition which lies yawning beneath their feet; nothing mindful until they are dashed down the precipice of ruin and despair which men will persist in risking to their irreparable loss and misery.

The law of conscience, if we but listen, speaks in thunder tones, or in its still small voice, ensures our salvation or perdition. It is never silent; its proclamations are heard not only whenever we sin, but while we remain in sin; it is solemnly and irrevocably heard at the hour of death; it is confirmed but never altered at the final judgment: alas, we never hear and will never hear the angels' trumpet and the manifest coming of Christ bright with the majesty of His throne, and attended with the angels and blessed spirits, sent into the world to execute judgment and to reject all who have rejected Him and put Him to shame before the world. The open shame shall be reversed; human decision will be altered; hearts will be turned inside out; sin will claim as its

own the souls of the damned; Jesus will claim those whom He has saved at the price of His cross and redeeming blood.

Jesus Christ is at once our Redeemer because He has shed His blood for our salvation. He is our advocate because He has gone to make continual intercession for us, sitting at the right hand of God; He is our judge, because we must all appear before His tribunal that we may receive according as we shall have done good or evil, and because the Father has given all judgment into His hands.

I have said that He is our judge: For at the hour of death, upon the separation of soul and body, we must stand before Him to render an account of our thoughts, words, deeds and omissions. In addition to this judgment undergone at the hour of death there is still another which differs not essentially from the first; for this, the general judgment, will be but a confirmation of the first judgment. It will not be because the Lord may have committed an error or that any miscarriage of justice might have taken place, but it simply will be that the judgment pronounced at the hour of death—which will be in secret and known only to the soul and to God, will be reaffirmed before the assembled world in order that there

may be seen how the providence of God has been justified and to show the justice of the particular judgment. It will also serve to show to the assembled world the wisdom of God which permits so frequently the good to suffer and the wicked to prosper; which so often allows the wicked to revel in sin and evil while the just man suffers in misery and indigence.

However, it is not my purpose to go farther into these distinctions as to the particular and general judgment because not necessary to my purpose. What it concerns us most to understand and to realize is the foundation that underlies these judgments and the issues that will turn upon them.

The Resurrection of the Body

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, an apostle called, set apart for the gospel of God, which he had promised before by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who was predestinated the Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord: by Whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith, in all nations for His name, are ye also called of Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I make mention of you always in my prayers; beseeching if by any means at length, by the will of God, I may, at some time, have a prosperous journey to come to you.

This is the wonderful exordium with which the Apostle Paul begins his remarkable epistle to the Romans. I merely quote it piecemeal that you may have some conception of the giant labor which Paul feels he is about to assume.

It all concerns His Son Who was made to Him of the seed of David according to the flesh. And he continues, Who was predestinated or manifested the Son of God by His power, according to the spirit of holiness, and as shown all His life long from His conception, and anointing with the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Ghost by Whom He was conceived in the womb of His Virgin Mother, who was with Him all the years of His life, ministered to by angels even in His agony and passion: all of which was confirmed by His resurrection from the dead, and the attesting voice of the Holy Ghost whose descending put the seal of divine veracity upon all His life and works and death and glorious resurrection from the dead: thereby proving that He was truly the manifested truth of God in the flesh for our salvation.

Ranking with the prophecies which foretold Christ, and which He gloriously fulfilled even to the very letter, and the miracles which during life He wrought to prove that He was the Incarnate Word, Son of the living God, the divine Word sent into the world, to save mankind; and the predictions uttered by Himself in His own regard, which as well were luminously verified, and other series of demonstra-

tions by which He showed Himself to be the predestined and manifested Son of God, by His resurrection from the dead, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost; the astounding conversion of St. Paul when Christ appeared to Him on his way to Damascus, where the light shone about him, and the voice of Jesus was heard declaring that He was Jesus of Nazareth whom he persecuted, and was even then breathing threatenings and slaughter against His disciples; there could be no more convincing proof of His divinity, as men in all ages have acknowledged, than this apparition and manifestation of the Son of God. The blood of Christ was still fresh on the earth, as it appears that not more than thirty-three years had passed since His birth. It would seem that Christ vouchsafed this new revelation of the divine Presence in the mystery of the Eucharist. "For, I, myself, have delivered unto you what I myself received," that in the night when Jesus was betrayed to be sacrificed, He took bread and blessed it; and He took wine and blessed it; "This is My Body, This is My Blood which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins." This new wonder does Christ present to St. Paul, that He may bring him to His knowledge and grace.

That unanimously with one mouth, ye may honor God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ad. Rom. XV. 6. To God the only True God through Jesus Christ, to Whom honor and glory forever and ever. XVI 27.

To Jesus Christ who is God blessed forever more.

To-day we hear of men denying the divinity of Jesus Christ. St. Paul seems to be of a contrary belief; for he declares the divinity of God incarnate, and renders Him the glory which he pays to the Eternal Father.

As a prelude to our discourse on the resurrection of the body, I begin with the fiftieth verse of the sixth chapter of St. John. "The bread that I give is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat the manna and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world." "How can this man give us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink?" And Christ replied, "Unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you shall not have life in you." And Christ repeated again and again to the sixth time. And a time will come when those who are in their graves shall arise, many unto eternal life, and many to eternal ruin. The apostles looked

on one another and then upon Christ. As if overcome by the impropriety of such a miracle, they asked how can this man give us His flesh to eat and His blood to drink? However, nothing daunted, Christ continued, "I say that unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you shall not have life in you." The disciples gave up the task of understanding the mystery, and went out from Him or walked no more with Him. Turning to the apostles He asks them, "Will you also leave Me?" Peter made answer: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life and we have believed the assurances that You have given us." Jesus was comforted by the words of Peter, the spokesman of the rest, and they walked together to death and glory. I have but given the substance of this divine colloquy between Christ and His apostles. All this furnishes us with the promises which Jesus gives mankind of the great mystery of transubstantiation by which Christ turned the bread into His body, and the wine into His blood. The whole chapter in St. John is to be read in extent by anyone who desires to ponder the words of Christ; without this, its study will be lost of one-half its effect.

In what I have said from St. John we have

enough to learn that our Lord promised to give us His body and blood as the food and nourishment of our souls and bodies. Hence His word is pledged to this effect on His sacred and unchanging word. And what greater authority or more overwhelming truth could be presented to the mind of man by the omnipotence of the Eternal God?

The events that followed this promise soon passed away. Many were the meetings held by Christ and His disciples. But the circumstance of the divine passion was never forgotten. The apostles and disciples turned and looked forward to its fulfillment; the time was fast approaching.

It was the night before He suffered; the gloom of Gethsemane was on His soul; the next day He was to suffer all that He had come into the world to suffer, and which He had actually suffered in anticipation all the days of His youth and early manhood until it was appointed Him to do the will of His Father.

His word is the foundation upon which He exacts this: His infallible and unerring word the same yesterday, to-day and forever; whose duration is from generation to generation. Finally, the night before His passion and

death, He takes bread and blesses, saying: "This is My Body," and taking wine He blesses it, saying: "This is My Blood which will be shed for the remission of sins." All the apostles are in solemn accord in the words which they report. St. John having already given the promise of the institution does not repeat the words. Subsequently St. Paul gives them with renewed emphasis, saying: "The chalice of benediction which we bless is it not the Blood of Christ, and the bread which we break is it not the Body of Christ?"

Thus we have the word of God as the solemn promise that in the Sacrament we receive the Body of Christ and the Blood of Christ. Not only this, but we have the Body of Christ Himself as the pledge of our faith and the earnest of our immortal hopes. Again, we have, furthermore, the security of our true faith.

"For if the spirit of God dwells in you, will not the Spirit of God resuscitate your mortal bodies because of the Holy Ghost dwelling in them?" We have also the guarantee that we shall rise on the last day from the dead to die no more. "For a day shall come when those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and arise unto an eternal life

or to an eternal shame." Thus, in brief, we have the word of God, His promise; His security, that He dwells in us and that we dwell in Him.

Jesus God incarnate is at once our Creator, our Redeemer, our triumphant Conqueror of sin and death, our King Who has come into the world to be our Savior, and our Leader Who is to lead captivity captive; in a word to be for us our Restorer to all that we have lost in the fall of Adam—to be for us the moral head of humanity restored; to be for us all that Adam our first father was for us as our first parent, our Sovereign Savior the moral head of our nature restored and regenerated and rebuilt again on the model of the first Adam. In Adam we all died because in him came sin and the misery it entailed. He died for our sins and rose again for our justification. If He had not died for us we would all have been lost beyond all hope of respite. "By one man came sin: by sin death and so death passed into all in whom all had sinned." It was of the overflowing mercy of God that we were given any farther prospect of hope or pardon.

For why did Christ assume our nature except for our own salvation. The principle

that ensures our salvation is because Christ died for us.

The principle that ensures the resurrection of Christ at the same moment secures our reconciliation with God; He was in Christ reconciling the world and sinners to Himself. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the pattern and model of our nature. In God we find our nature; in Jesus Christ we find our Redeemer, in God the Holy Ghost we find our sanctification; in all three Persons we find our origin, our bliss, and our eternal destiny.

Whatever constitutes the basis of Christ's resurrection is the basis of our own hope of eternal life; His blood is the purchase price of our salvation. The grace of God the Father has been gained for us by the passion and death of the Son. The effusion of the Holy Ghost has been poured out for our souls. The principle of Christ's death has been the same for Christ's resurrection as it has become that of our own. The father of our humanity; our brother in the flesh; in the name of God the Father, by the example of Jesus Christ: by the wisdom of the Holy Ghost, we are all restored to the lost inheritance sustained by our race. For by the power of the Father, the

goodness of Christ, by the diffusion and concentrating of the grace of the Holy Ghost have we been saved. For if the spirit of God dwells not in you you will not. He Who raised Jesus from the dead resuscitates your mortal bodies because of the Holy Ghost dwelling in you. He Who brought your bodies to the very portals of death will He not reopen the gates of life to all for whom Christ has died? To what purpose would He allow you to taste death unless He meant to summon you to eternal life? To what purpose shall the trumpet at the last day be heard calling the sons of men to judgment unless it be that they may enter into eternal life and escape the death of woe reserved for all who shall rise to an everlasting and execrative woe? A day will come when those who are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man; for we must all be manifested upon the judgment of Christ.

Unless in this life we begin the union which constitutes our salvation, we shall not have life in us, and we must all likewise perish. For unless you eat My flesh and drink My blood you shall not have life in you. Not as your fathers did eat the manna and died; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. The mysterious union broken or interrupted by the

loss of original justice and sanctifying grace is redeemed by this mystery by which our souls are received with Christ and become partners of Christ as our father, brother, Savior, the pledge and earnest of our undying life. He that eateth Me the same abideth in Me. God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost shall enter into us and make their mansion with us.

This immortal life if begun at all must be begun here below. The eternal union cannot be taken up after our death. If Christ died for our sins He rose again for our justification and glorification. Read the 11th Chapter of St. Paul to the Cor.

This chapter is the philosophy of the gospel. This body is now a temporal and material matter. It will arise a spiritual and glorified body. Thou fool, exclaims St. Paul, dost thou not know that this body is indeed a material body, grain, seed or the like: it will arise an incorporeal or spiritual body. The seed must wither before the fruit is formed: the petal of the flower must decompose and be reduced to the proper elements of that which it will become. Not the seed that shall be: but the seed that is and that shall become the future body glorified and spiritual, and immortal, im-

material, the living image of the risen Savior. This is our destiny and unfailing hope. None but St. Paul or one of the prophets can portray for us what the human body risen in image of Christ from the dead shall one day become by the omnipotence of the Triune God.

Behold the principle and cause of our resurrection from the dead to die no more, but to be as the angels of God. Truly Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification, the first fruit of those that sleep; that temporary sleep that reveals to us our immortal life and undying hopes and unfailing prospects, and the guarantee of life everlasting. I believe in the resurrection of the body, the restoration of the flesh, exclaimed the words of the divine creed, the profession of our faith. For we know that in our flesh we shall see God —Whom I myself shall see and not another. holy Job lets us into the same divine truth. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in my flesh I shall see God, and shall arise to behold Him face to face. This was the animating principle of holy Job who transmitted to us the whole Jewish tradition from the beginning. Moses, Daniel, Isaiah, and all the prophets foresaw and longed for this coming.

They foresaw it and rejoiced in the vision, and were even made glad—the very sons of God and forerunners of the Eternal Son himself Who was destined to come in the fulness of time and the consummation of ages, according to the providence of the Most High, and the promise made to Israel, Isaac, Jacob and all the other forerunners of Christ; and particularly to Moses the liberator of the Jewish peoples.

Behold the spirituality, or immateriality of our natures and qualities which God confers upon us, the undying bliss, attributes of the immortal soul, come forth from God to whom it must return; the model and pattern, the temporary suffering, the unending bliss around us and within us; the living image of God the Creator, our Redeemer, our sovereign judge, and benefactor; our sanctifier with Whose gifts and graces we are made holy and annointed for eternal life. All this, however, must be on the condition of our fidelity to God and our conscientious observance of the law of God written in our souls. Which is the voice of God speaking in us and through us, guiding us to whither we should pursue our course. "For he that walketh in light, walketh not in darkness, said the Lord." But he that pur-

sueth darkness findeth the things of darkness. He that travelleth much is finally lost. For to his conscience he turns a deaf ear, and no longer hearkens to his interior monitor.

In that day men will assemble together in the one spot: eternity to eternity will coalesce and form the great body of time and duration. Quick as lightning leaping from mountain to mountain and from time to time till they could communicate together, omnipresence and ubiquity or the power to be everywhere at one and the same moment, will be the attribute of these risen souls. All shall stand, as it were, together. So vast and incalculable shall be the multitude that the very world would seem insufficient to contain them. From cycles of ages and untold eons of years, when time to everyone shall be no more, the whole world and all the generations of mankind from the beginning until now, and from now until the last instant of duration; yet it is to be borne in mind that all this will be the reward and the consequence of virtuous perseverance; no relapse to an evil past can take the place of those who shall have purchased their eternal reward with so great a price. Always and ubique and forever must be the motto of the immortal soul.

What is it to live; is life worth the living?

ask some ephemeral philosophers. Although a few may affect, none really live as if they believed or realized this delusive phantom by which they would console their minds. In spite of all pretence as the poet tells us, life is real, life is earnest, and the lives of others remind us that we can make our lives sublime and departing leave behind us footsteps on the sands of time. For no one is content with such precarious and transitory a satisfaction. We would live and take our permanent abode in the thoughts and affections and existence and characters and deeds of men and of the world's history whether for a period or for all time, and the benefit of human society and the souls we love and are entrusted to our care and responsibility. Individuals are the integral of the whole body of mankind.

What is it to die! To be or not to be—to subsist and to be lost, in order to enjoy the good of existence, to suffer the trials, or endure all that may be our lot here in being; or, by opposing them or perishing in the attempt. To live, to enjoy all that is possible to our nature, or die and sink into the grave under the sod of the moss-covered resting place of our ancestors.

Death is certainly a dreadful passage from

life to non-life: from being to non-being: from actual fruition to possible suffering and misery. Who can measure the unmeasured interval between these states? Who will leap this gulf and land where he would in bliss, or is it not better to sink into the effacement of the grave—into the chambers of forgetfulness and death? In which would the most real happiness be found? It is better to bear the evils we have than fly to others that we know not of, declares the poet.

What is it to revive again to life, or, and even more to immortality; even after a long deprivation of bliss! Such would be indeed a great consolation yet it could never compensate for the loss sustained.

What is it to revive again on the distant shores of eternity after struggling with the temptations of this life? How consolatory to possess and enjoy life again after the experience of the misery into which death has led or left us but does not rescue us forevermore.

To be immortal, that is, not to be able to die, to hold existence as your inalienable right: to live to be deathless, as your inheritance forever: this is to live twice: the first that we are born to in this life: the other the life that we

strike upon hereafter. One is mortal and the other immortal and endures forevermore.

This last is what we all crave and pray for, and beseech God in His gracious providence to afford us and preserve us forever till God shall come to lead us on to perpetual peace and undiminished felicity. This is the inscription that we find written in every graveyard as on every mountain top. To God be glory everlasting, Amen.

What is death? To die, to be separated and forever from relatives, from friends, from acquaintances, from all whom we hold nearest and dearest, for whom we willingly die, or for whom we would cheerfully live; to join the good men and true who poured out of the loins of Noah down to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their offspring, to the remotest or nearest blood of Christ and Joseph and Mary; to join the patriarchs and prophets, and all the just made perfect: to the white robed army of martyrs who were such in spirit as in deed: to those who will return to the earth in company with the Saviour of men at the last day to judge all men—to be eternally united with Him for bliss or for weal or for woe: to end life or rather to begin immortal life and ever-

lasting bliss: or rather to enter into true life: to be with the immortal worthies, the good and just heroes, prophets, saints. It is to meet my great progenitors, those of my country: whose lives have been my examples and incentives forming the great assembly of which I am one. This is to die. What a glorious prospect? How far from discouragement but rather how inspiring the undying and consolatory fate thus reserved for all men, even for the least not less than for the greatest. Who would not die that he might possess this life and its accompanying bliss and unfailing hope?

Why then recoil from the prospect of the grave, so long as it falls short of annihilation. But if annihilation is before us with its dread and chilly prospect no wonder that we recoil from the fire and water, and vengeful spirits that beset us on every side armed to cast us into misery and woe that knows no end. Let hope spring eternal in our saddened bosoms.

When all men shall come together in the Valley of Jehoshaphat before the tribunal of the living and the dead, when the doom shall be unalterable and decisive, when it will be impossible to avert the awful doom that will hang imminent upon the vast multitude

yielded from the graveyards of the earth, when they who are destined to shall die before judgment is pronounced, and those that are alive shall be caught up in the clouds and whirled away out of sight, before the final separation of the good and evil, and go to their last abode, we shall then realize the awful justice which during life has permitted the good to suffer and the wicked to prosper. Then in that day, that dreadful day of retribution, when judgment parchments shall be unfolded to the astonished gaze of the countless armies of souls who will then tremble at the dread attestation of the quaking sinners and the crowned and justification of the just souls of the elect. What an enormous difference between those at the right and those at the left of the Redeemer and Judge of mankind.

The resurrection of the body, the life everlasting, the wonderful works and changes that console every soul and animate every Christian and elevate to a lofty degree of supernatural the character of a human being.

Nor can I fail to believe that that which I have yet to add will be fully comprehended in the two articles of the Creed which follow: The reanimation of the soul and the life perpetual which follows.

Jesus Christ rose from the dead not precisely by the power of the Father, but by His Own inherent vitality and the lifegiving principle which at once sustained His bodily life and divine life which was all His own and belonged to Him as His own divine omnipotence. He came forth from the grave conqueror of death, became the supreme ruler of His destiny as the result of His inherent and unceasing omnipotence which never left Him nor forsook Him for one hour in His apparently lonely solitude. In fact, the angels surrounded Him and sang hosannahs to His victory over death. For the spirit of God raised Jesus from the dead; will not He Who thus raised Him from death to life resuscitate your mortal bodies because of this vital, lifegiving principle within Him? But if He rose, we must also rise: the fate of Jesus is our fate forevermore. We must follow Him whither He has gone to prepare our eternal abode.

The renovation of the body for life perpetual! what a glorious prospect! Realization of all that sage and prophet and the preknowledge of all ages has gathered and focussed of the hopes of our fallen race, brought back to the rank upon which once constituted. We must follow the humanity of Jesus made

sacred by His divinity. One flesh, one body, one father, one brother under the protection of the divine mother of whom Jesus was born: the divine relationship is forever established between God and Mary—Christ Jesus.

Life everlasting. To live forever—to die no more! what an ineffable consolation. Who will measure this appalling profundity? What plummet ever cast its line to fathom the height and depth and breadth of this vast and bottomless ocean. No wonder that saint and sinner and all the children of men are overwhelmed in this limitless, boundless, endless sublimity; the mirror of the Most High, the image of eternity; the mirror of the omnipotence of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the image of all creation made and yet to be made!

Life everlasting! To die no more; no longer to taste its bitterness or its dregs! What matters it to me if I must die; for I know that I shall live and rise again to share the bliss of eternity. Cast away all fear; let your soul refresh itself in the torrent of delight.

From the grave of death, all hideous though it be, the body corrupt for a time, will become immortal, and come forth glorious and immortal to enjoy God forevermore. Sad indeed is the prospect and certainty of death, yet

there is a light from the grave that illumines the world and even the souls of men. Who can recoil from union with Jesus in His eternal embrace though it be the embrace of death.

No wonder that faithful ones seek to commemorate by lofty monument, or mark with graceful tomb, the last resting places of their dead. It is not strange that food should be placed near the dead, not to feed them but that these things may serve to remind the living of their duty of prayers for those who have gone before us to the shores of eternity where we may well pause and look back upon our sometimes unmindful of or forgotten departed.

First Corinthians XV.

Not all flesh is the same flesh; but one indeed of men, another of beasts, another of birds, and another of fishes. And there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; but one indeed is the glory of the heavenly, and another of the earthly: one the glory of the sun, another the glory of the moon, and another the glory of the stars. For star differeth from star in glory: so also the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorrup-

tion. It is sown in dishonor, it shall rise in glory; it is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual, as it is written. The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening spirit. Yet not first that which is spiritual, but that which is natural: afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man of earth, earthly: the second man of heaven, heavenly. Such as is the earthly, such also they who are earthly: and such as the heavenly, such also shall be they who are heavenly. Therefore, as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the heavenly. Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God: neither shall corruption possess incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptible: and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption: and this mortal put on immortality. But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, then

shall be brought to pass the saying, which is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. Grave, where is thy victory? death, where is thy sting? Now, the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Chirst. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast and immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord always, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Hymn

The day was redd'ning in the sky,
With "Alleluias" rang the air;
Earth held a glorious jubilee
Hell gnashed its teeth in fierce despair:

When our most valiant mighty King
From death's abyss in dread array
Led the long-prisoned Fathers forth
Into the beam of light and day:

When He Whom stone, and seal, and guard,
Had safely to the tomb consigned
Triumphant rose and buried death
Deep in the grave he left behind:

"Calm all your grief and still your tears"—
  Hark, the descending angel cries—
"For Christ is risen from the dead,
  And death is slain, no more to rise."

O Jesus, from the death of sin
  Keep us, we pray, so shalt Thou be
The everlasting Paschal joy
  Of all the souls new-born in Thee.

Now to the Father, and the Son
  Who rose from death, be glory given;
With Thee, O Holy Comforter!
  Henceforth by all in earth and heaven.
Amen.

"Think not that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuseth you, Moses, in whom ye trust. For if ye did believe Moses, ye would believe Me also; for he wrote concerning Me. But if ye do not believe his writings, how will ye believe My works?" St. John V; 45-47.

Writing was much in use in Egypt in the time of Moses, and was well understood there ages before him. This we know from the discoveries of Egyptology made in our time. Hence true criticism does not require us to assume that Moses was acquainted but rather that he was even conversant with this art. He who was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" must have known this elemental preliminary to any knowledge which they possessed.

And this consideration as it removes the difficulty of assuming that he did not know how to write or that writing was subsequent, at the same time, forces us to believe that he must have written the Pentateuch. He could

not have failed; it would be apart from all reason to suppose that he did not write the Revelation and the law which he had received from God. As to the manner of writing whether by his own hand or by dictation, is immaterial. Probably both ways according to occasion. He who was mindful to command his people to meditate upon the law, to engrave it upon monuments, and on the very doors of their houses, and which was to be inscribed by every king ascending the throne, and to be read publicly every seven years, did not so far fail to obey his own admonitions, as not to put in writing what he was himself so solicitous about; such precautions are incompatible with such neglect. There was none in his time, nor subsequently more capable than himself for this momentous task, and from the nature of the case they were all less capable; we cannot believe that such a task was left to mere tradition. The mandates of God were inscribed on tablets. We are not to suppose that Moses was the original author of everything in the Pentateuch. Former generations had written and preserved the records of past events. Moses availed himself of all within his reach; doubtless the literature of Joseph, Jacob, and Abraham had come to his hand. He adopted

the method of other writers, adapting, curtailing, extending, translating.

As everything in Genesis did not come originally from Moses, so there is no need to claim for him the last portion of Deuteronomy. It is hard to discern exactly where Moses ends and the next writer begins—so closely consecutive is the thread of the narrative. Description of Moses' death likely is the work of the same writer, although there is nothing out of the way in supposing that Moses wrote the account; it being revealed to him by God, or as his mandate as to how he should be buried, put in the narrative form, as persons sometimes leave instructions as to their funeral, etc., or even during life have their names inscribed on monuments. Such description suitably finds a place, as an appendix to his work, at the close of Deuteronomy.

It would be strange if there were no interpolations, as no work of antiquity is free from them. Yet no one claims that they affect the main issue: the conclusion of the Lord's prayer with a Greek doxology does not invalidate St. Matthew's Gospel. Such growths or additions only show that the truth already pre-existed.

For sake merely of logical order we are not

to shut out the light that comes pouring from the New Testament. This were to trifle with truth. He who wants the truth seeks light from whatsoever source, independently of time or logical sequence. It were uncritical to determine the authorship of the Pentateuch irrespectively and independently of the New Testament. It were to shut our eyes to the truth, through a blind adherence to the order of books; it were to act as if we did not want the truth unless it would come to us as we would have it. Why prefer guidance by the light of the moon, when the sun is in his effulgence?

Testimony of Christ: Said He to the Sadducees, Mark II, 26: "Have ye not read in the Book of Moses how in the bush God spake unto him saying: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? And in Luke XX, 37, he says: "Now that the dead are raised even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham," etc.

The Book of Moses means the WHOLE Pentateuch. In the days of Christ no discrimination was made between its parts so that one part should be ascribed to one and another, but it was all ascribed to Moses.

The relation which Christ asserts to exist between Moses and the Pentateuch is that of authorship, i. e., that the BOOK WAS WRITTEN by Moses. Christ in saying (Luke, XX, 37): "Now that the dead are raised even Moses showed," etc., declares Moses the author of the Pentateuch, by declaring him the narrator of the incident.

With Christ the Book of Moses means his real authorship. For any other acceptation would require doubt in the minds of Christ's hearers, which doubt was not dreamed of at that time. For how could Christ be forced to the necessity of using the phrase outside of its ordinary, obvious sense, as not meaning that Moses wrote it, unless He felt that the Jews were in error in believing that he did? How could He confirm them in their error by using, as He did, the obvious sense? There was wanting therefor the partial unbelief that alone could justify Christ in speaking in a sense accommodated to their error, but which He knew to be erroneous. The ordinary phrase used without qualification does not lead into error when it is known to be doubtful matter. The natural meaning points to real authorship; any other prerequires doubt in the minds of those listening. Without this doubt,

no writer would quote the Pentateuch as the Book of Moses, if he believed it were not his, but would intimate some qualification, at least to save his future reputation as a critic. * * *

Not only would private and subjective criticism avail to destroy Christianity and primal revelation, not alone in the New Testament, but sceptical criticism upon the Old, and notably on the Pentateuch. Many marvels strange to the times and alien to their taste, recorded in Genesis and the other pentateuchal Books were yet historic, was still respected, and as Mosaic writings had already received many rude onslaughts, skeptics proceeded slowly to eradicate these marvels. To winnow out the supernatural and to let what they fancied remain was a hopeless task. Eichhorn and his disciples taught that the fall and the loss of Paradise was only a delusive vestige of some primal calamity, the forbidden fruit a disordered dream, the voice of God, a clap of thunder: obvious miracles tortured into natural phenomena or into a poetical exaggeration or pious fraud, or interpolation of some late writer. The flame on Sinai was a bonfire; the fiery column a torch going before the caravan; the shining of Moses' face electricity or the result of excitement and strong feeling;

the brazen serpent was erected that those bitten might be cured by the perspiration caused by hosts advancing towards it! These are the mythical forces which the so-called higher criticism would undermine, the authority and truth of the skeptics.

Profane histories in ancient and modern times have accorded acceptance and acquiescence and belief in the Books of Moses. The Books of Deuteronomy involve and presuppose the pre-existence of the four preceding books; otherwise, they would be unintelligible.

Verse Fifth obviously compels their existence: "And Moses began to expound this law." Deuteronomy is in great measure a summary of the law with observations and superadded material, not in a difficult form but adapted to the people. It is redolent of the very spirit of Moses, and so manifests his consideration, and tenderness of heart; and for this reason it is more quoted and better known than the rest of the Pentateuch.

Deuteronomy and the rest of the Pentateuch from the Kings carry back to Moses. It is in the hands of Josias in the eighteenth year of his reign; for the book of the law was then found in the Temple. Priests, Levites, People, the King, believed it to be the work of Moses.

The Prophetess Hulda used its phrases and shows familiarity with its spirit and ideas.

Amasias put his servants to death, that is, those who had killed his father; but not the children of the murderers, which was according to Mosaic Law; 4th Kings XIV, 6. This was two hundred years before Josias. ,

The similarity, not to say the identity, of Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, and the exhortations of Moses to the Jewish people, his followers, would indicate that Moses' book was perfectly well known to Solomon; that their spirit and their mind were one and identical.

Indeed, the Hebrew commonwealth was based upon the Pentateuch as its foundation and animating principle.

Deuteronomy was known to the Hebrews from Ezra to Joshua, who succeeded Moses, and Joshua was familiar with its facts, impregnated with its spirit and conversant with its language. Moses, throughout the history of the Hebrews, was believed to be its author. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers must have gone before Deuteronomy. Whatever part he wrote or composed, it has come down entire with his sanction and authority, uninterrupted save with few exceptions.

The institutes of Moses, who received the law, would naturally share the same careful preparation, so that the belief of Mosaic authenticity stood the onslaught and held its own and even more. So that to-day the learned world holds out for Mosaic authority and is alone able to bear the brunt of thorough criticism and investigation.

The belief of ages has proved superior to all attacks and to-day men rest easy in its acceptation. Philo for the generation before Christ; Josephus for those coming after; the Talmudists for the whole Jewish people. "Jehovah thy God is the true God."—Deuteronomy XVIII, Book III, 15-19. St. Mark XII, 26; St. Luke XX, 37.

Not until the Eighteenth Century, with its infidel tendencies, was this persuasion molested, when revolutionary ideas began to shake all literature and religion and loosen the bonds that held faith and society together. Now and then, back in the centuries, Celsus and Ptolemy, and much later Peyrerius, Hobbs and Spinoza compelled replies in the defense of the belief held for long ages of years. Attacks upon the authenticity of classical writers had for its outcome assaults upon the sacred books of Moses. The very existence of poets was

unceremoniously and rudely shaken. Upwards of two dozen illustrious writers came to the defense of Scripture, of Moses and his writings.

St. Austin ascribes to Moses the History of Creation, and calls his history divine; styles him the first prophet. St. Basil says we should assent to its authority, on Moses' words, who was instructed by God.

Even as a human production it is worthy of the profoundest respect. As a divine work, held as such by the Jewish people, and by Christ's words and Christian tradition, it claims profound homage; because divinely enlightened to make known a beginning of all things; moved by the Holy Spirit in what Moses could only know by divine illumination.

St. Chrysostum says that in describing the history of the world Moses virtually says "He was instructed by God." St. Irenaeus and St. Justin considered the words of Moses as those of Christ.

Moses solves the problem which puzzled all the philosophers. His unfolding the origin of things must have come from Revelations. He could not have invented these truths. Its acceptance by the people from the start and its retention down the ages without contradiction,

profusely evinces the divine authenticity of the Books of Moses.—Kings IV, 14, Verses 5 and 6.

"And Moses called all Israel and said to them: Hear, O Israel, the ceremonies and judgments, which I speak in your ears this day: learn them and fulfill them in work. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. He made not the covenant with our fathers, but with us, who are now present and living. He spoke to us face to face in the mount out of the midst of fire. I was the mediator and stood between the Lord and you at that time, to show you his words; for you feared the fire, and went not up into the mountain: and he said: I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods in my sight. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any things, that are in heaven above, or that are in the earth beneath, or that abide in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, and thou shalt not serve them. For I am the Lord thy God, a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon their children unto the third and fourth generation to them that hate him. And showing mercy

unto many thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for he shall not be unpunished that taketh his name upon a vain thing. Observe the day of the Sabbath, to sanctify it as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labor, and shall do all thy works. The seventh day is the Sabbath, that is, the rest of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not do any work therein, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy ox, nor thy ass, nor any of thy beasts, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest, even as thyself. Remember that thou also didst serve in Egypt: and the Lord thy God brought thee out from thence with a strong hand, and stretched-out arm. Therefore hath he commanded thee that thou shouldst observe the Sabbath Day. Honour thy father and mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee, that thou mayest live a long time, and it may be well with thee in the land, which the Lord thy God will give thee. Thou shalt not kill. Neither shalt thou commit adultery. And thou shalt not steal. Neither shalt thou bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt

not covet thy neighbor's wife; nor his house, nor his field, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his. These words the Lord spoke to all the multitude of you in the mountain, out of the midst of the fire and the cloud, and the darkness, with a loud voice, adding nothing more: and he wrote them in two tables of stone, which he delivered unto me.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength. And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in my heart. And thou shalt tell them to thy children: and thou shalt meditate upon them sitting in thy house, and walking on thy journey, sleeping and rising. And thou shalt bind them as a sign on thy hand. And they shall be and shall move between thy eyes. And thou shalt write them in the entry, and on the doors of thy house. And when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee in the land, for which he swore to thy fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and shall have given thee great and goodly cities, which thou didst not build, houses full of riches, which thou didst not set

up, cisterns which thou didst not dig, vineyards and olive yards, which thou didst not plant."

Compare the passage of Moses which I have just quoted from Deuteronomy and which I could further quote from Deuteronomy and the other five books, with those used by Solomon in the dedication of the temple, and you see at once how the wisest of men was impregnated with the spirit of the great Law Giver. How the words of Moses rise spontaneously to the mind of Solomon and how his words find expression on his lips! The two indeed were divinely inspired and the one becomes the voucher for and endorser of the other.

3rd Kings, Chapter VIII, 12, and the following verses:

"Then Solomon said: The Lord said that he would dwell in a cloud. Building I have built a house for thy dwelling, to be thy most firm throne forever. And the King turned his face, and blessed all the assembly of Israel: Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, who spoke with his mouth to David my father, and with his own hand hath accomplished it, saying: Since the day that I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel, for a house to be built, that my name

might be there: but I chose David to be over my people Israel. And David my father would have built a house to the name of the Lord thy God of Israel. And the Lord said to David my father: whereas thou hast thought in thy heart to build a house to my name, thou hast done well in having this same thing in thy mind. Nevertheless thou shalt not build me a house: but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build a house to my name. The Lord hath performed his word which he spoke: and I stand in the room of David, my father, and sit upon the throne of Israel, as the Lord promised; and have built a house to the name of the Lord the God of Israel. And I have set there a place for the ark wherein is the covenant of the Lord, which he made with our fathers, when they came out of the land of Egypt. And Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord, in the sight of the Assembly of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven: and said: Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above or on earth beneath: who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants that have walked before thee with all their heart; who has kept with thy servant David my father, what thou hast promised him: with thy mouth thou didst speak and with

thy hands thou hast performed, as this day proveth. Now therefore, O Lord God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father what thou hast spoken to him, saying: There shall not be taken away from thee a man in my sight, to sit on the throne of Israel; so that thy children take heed to thy way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked in my sight. And now, Lord God of Israel, let thy words be established, which thou hast spoken to thy servant David my father. Is it then to be thought that God should indeed dwell upon earth. For if heaven and the heavens of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house which I have built? But have regard to the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplications, O Lord my God: Hear the hymn and the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee this day: That thy eyes may be open upon this house night and day; upon the house upon which thou hast said: my name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth in this place to thee. That thou mayest hearken to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, whatsoever they shall pray for in this place; and hear them in the place of thy dwelling in heaven; and when thou hearest, show them mercy. If any

man trespass against his neighbor and have an oath upon him, wherewith he is bound, and come because of the oath, before thy altar to thy house, then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked; and bring his way unto his own head; and justifying the just, and rewarding him according to his justice. If thy people Israel shall fly before their enemies (because they will sin against thee) and doing penance, and confessing to thy name, shall come, and pray, and make supplications to thee in this house, then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them back to the land which thou gavest to their fathers. If heaven shall be shut up, and there shall be no rain, because of their sins, and they praying in this place, shall do penance to thy name, and shall be converted from their sins, by occasion of their afflictions: then hear thou them in heaven; and forgive the sins of thy servants, and of thy people Israel: and show them the good way wherein they should walk; and give rain upon thy land which thou hast given to thy people in possession. If a famine arise in the land, or a pestilence, or corrupt air, or blasting, or locusts, or mildew, if their enemy afflict them besieging the gates, whatsoever

plague, whatsoever infirmity, whatsoever curse of imprecation shall happen to any man of thy people Israel: when a man shall know the wound of his own heart and shall spread forth his hands in this house, then hear thou in heaven, in the place of thy dwelling; and forgive, and do so as to give to everyone according to his ways, as thou shalt see his heart (for thou only knowest the heart of all the children of men), that they may fear thee all the days that they live upon the face of the land which thou hast given to our fathers. Moreover also the stranger who is not of thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far country for thy namesake (for they shall hear everywhere of thy great name and thy mighty hand, and thy stretched-out arm) so when he shall come, and shall pray in this place, then hear thou in heaven in the firmament of thy dwelling place; and do all these things, for which that stranger shall call upon thee: that all thy people of the earth may learn to hear thy name, as do thy people Israel, and may prove that thy name is called upon this house, which I have built. If thy people go out to war against their enemies, by what way so ever thou shalt send them, they shall pray to thee towards the way of the city which thou hast chosen, and to-

wards the house that I have built to thy name. And then hear thou in heaven their prayers, and their supplications, and do judgment for them. But if they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and thou being angry deliver them up to their enemies, so that they may be led captive into the land of their enemies far or near, then if they do penance in their heart in the place of captivity, and being converted, make supplication to thee in their captivity, saying: we have sinned; we have done unjustly; we have committed wickedness: and return to thee with all their heart, and all their soul, in the land of their enemies, to which they have been led captive; and pray to thee towards the way of their land, which thou hast given to their fathers, and of the city which thou hast chosen and of the temple which I have built to thy name: Then hear thou in heaven, in the firmament of thy throne, their prayers, and their supplications, and do judgment for them: And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee and all their iniquities, for which they have transgressed against thee: and give them mercy before them that hath made them captives, that they may have compassion on them. For they are thy people and thy inheritance, whom thou hast brought out

of the land of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron; That thy eyes may be opened to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people, Israel, to hear them in all things for which they shall call upon thee. For thou hast separated them to thyself for an inheritance from among all the people of the earth, as thou hast spoken by Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God. And it came to pass when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication to the Lord, that he rose from before the altar of the Lord: for he had fixed both knees on the ground, and had spread his hands towards heaven. And he stood and blessed all the assembly of Israel with a loud voice, saying: Blessed be the Lord who hath given rest to his people Israel, according to all that he promised; there hath not failed so much as one word of all the good things that he promised by his servant Moses. The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers and not leave us, nor cast us off; but may He incline our hearts to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways, and keep His commandments, and His ceremonies, and all His judgments which He commanded our fathers. And let these my words, wherewith I

have prayed before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our God day and night, that He may do judgment for His servant, and for His people Israel day by day: That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord He is God, and there is no other beside Him. Let our hearts also be perfect with the Lord our God, that we may walk in His statutes, and keep His commandments, as at this day. And the King, and all Israel with him, offered victims before the Lord. And Solomon slew victims of peace-offerings which he sacrificed to the Lord, two and twenty thousand oxen, and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep; so the King and the children of Israel dedicated the Temple of the Lord. In that day the King sanctified the middle of the Court, that was before the house of the Lord: for there he offered the holocaust, and sacrifice, and fats of the peace-offerings, because the brazen altar that was before the Lord was too little to receive the holocaust and sacrifice, and fat of the peace offerings. And Solomon made at the same time a solemn feast, and all Israel with him, a great multitude from the entrance of Emath to the River of Egypt, before the Lord our God, seven days and seven days, that is fourteen days. And on the eighth day he sent

away the people: and they blessed the King, and went to their dwellings rejoicing and glad in heart for all the good things that the Lord had done for David His servant, and for Israel, His people."

And so I might continue quoting from Deuteronomy and showing the divine spirit which animated the soul of the divine Moses, God's own divine and heavenly-sent legate. The spirit that permeates what I have just quoted and what I might continue to quote, is identical with what Moses had written in the First Book of the Pentateuch Genesis and shows clearly the unmistakable authenticity of the same author for both, and for the remaining five books called the Pentateuch.

Moses

Moses, the patriot fierce, became
  The meekest man on earth,
To show us how love's quick'ning flame
  Can give our souls new birth.

Moses, the man of meekest heart,
  Lost Canaan by self-will,
To show, where Grace has done its part,
  How sin defiles us still.

Thou, who has taught me in Thy fear,
  Yet seest me frail at best
O grant me loss with Moses here,
  To gain his future rest!

(Newman)

Death of Moses

My Father's hope! my childhood's dream!
  The promise from on high!
Long waited for! its glories beam
  Now when my death is nigh.

My death is come, but not decay;
  Nor eye nor mind is dim;
The keenness of youth's vigorous day
  Thrills in each nerve and limb.

Blest scene! Thrice welcome after toil
  If no deceit I view;
O might my lips but press the soil
  And prove the vision true!

Its glorious heights, its wealthy plains;
  Its many tinted groves
They call! but He my steps restrains
  Who chastens whom He loves.

Ah! now they melt * * * they are but
shades * * *
I die!—yet is no rest,
O Lord! in store, since Canaan fades
But seen, and not possest?

(Newman)

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